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THE AUDIENCE

OF

OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE

Catherine Wolfe

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This thesis aims to identify and to describe Anglo-Saxon vernacular texts according to the manners in which they were intended to be approached by their original audience: whether through private reading, oral delivery, formal reading, informal reading in groups or through meditative and prayerful reading.

The dissertation begins with a survey of the historical evidence for the several styles of reading in late antiquity and in the early Middle Ages, arguing that while it may be impossible to determine whether and how a given historical figure read the surviving vernacular literature, it is nonetheless possible to determine whether a particular work was suitable and was intended for a specific mode of reception by examining the references to the audience which the piece contains. Through a systematic examination of the texts for their references to the audience, which forms the body of the thesis, it is possible to determine which styles of text would have been suitable for a particular mode of reading: in so doing, features such as the characterisation of the narrator, the experiences of the audiences and the differences between the audiences of the work and of the text are also examined and discussed.

While the thesis thus draws on the interests of oral-formulaic studies and of reader-response criticism, it is concerned primarily with identifying the actions of the audience rather than the means of a text's composition or with the interpretative interaction between audience and text. However, the differences between medieaval and modern modes of private reading, particularly in regard to features such as transparency of text, are of some relevance to the understanding of medieaval reception and form a part of the arguments proposed, which seek to categorise the Old English textual corpus according to its function rather than to its content.
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Acknowledgements and Preface

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The thesis is dedicated to my parents.

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

This dissertation does not exceed the regulation length, including footnotes, references and appendices but excluding the bibliography.
Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this thesis are consonant with those given in A Bibliography of Publications on Old English Literature to the End of 1972, edited by Stanley B. Greenfield and Fred C. Robinson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

Journals and Series:

- An Med: Annuale Medievale
- Archiv: Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen
- ASE: Anglo-Saxon England
- ASPR: The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records
- BaP: Bibliotheek der angelsächsischen Prosa
- CCSL: Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
- DAI: Dissertation Abstracts International
- EEMF: Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile
- EETS es: Early English Text Society Extra Series
- EETS os: Early English Text Society Original Series
- EETS ss: Early English Text Society Supplementary Series
- EHR: English Historical Review
- ES: English Studies
- Estm: Englische Studien
- JEGP: Journal of English and Germanic Philology
- MAE: Medium Ævum
- MLN: Modern Language Notes
- MLQ: Modern Language Quarterly
- MLR: Modern Language Review
- MP: Modern Philology
- MS: manuscript
- MSS: manuscripts
- NM: Neuphilologische Mitteilungen
- N&Q: Notes and Queries
- PBA: Proceedings of the British Academy
- PL: Patrologia Latina, ed. by J.-P. Migne
- PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association
- RES: Review of English Studies
- SP: Studies in Philology
- TPS: Transactions of the Philological Society
- TRHS: Transactions of the Royal Historical Society
Books:

*Catalogue*  

*EHD*  
*English Historical Documents*, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock

*Plan*  
*A Plan for the Dictionary of Old English*, ed. by Angus Cameron and Roberta Frank (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973)

*Sawyer*  

References to listings in the *Catalogue*, in the *Plan* and in Sawyer are cited thus:  
'Ker 70B art. e; Plan B.20.1.1.3'; 'S1467'.

Publishers:

- CUP: Cambridge University Press
- CoUP: Columbia University Press
- EUP: Edinburgh University Press
- HUP: Harvard University Press
- IUP: Indiana University Press
- JHUP: John Hopkins University Press
- MUP: Manchester University Press
- NYUP: New York University Press
- OUP: Oxford University Press
- PUP: Princeton University Press
- RB: Rosenkilde and Bagger
- RKP: Routledge and Kegan Paul
- RUP: Rutgers University Press
- SUNYP: State University of New York Press
- UCP: University of California Press
- UNDP: University of Notre Dame Press
- UNP: University of Nebraska Press
- UTP: University of Toronto Press
- UTP: University of Tennessee Press
- UWP: University of Wisconsin Press
- WB: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft
- YUP: Yale University Press
Reading, Audience and the Approach to the Text.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify and to describe the manners in which the surviving Old English texts are most likely to have been received by their original Anglo-Saxon audience, with the aim of understanding the vernacular texts according not to their subjects but to their intended use. It is my contention that the sourcing, the dating and the aesthetic appreciation of a text are pursuits which can be undertaken successfully only when the text itself has been understood not simply according to its content but according to the function which it was intended to serve by its author or translator, or by the compiler of the manuscript in which it survives. By examining the texts with an interest in their intended reader or hearers rather than in the date, the provenance or in the subject, the texts may be ranked according to the proportion of the necessary visual element in their reception. Through this functional approach, a receptional spectrum may be produced which ranges from texts which could have been received only by the individual reader, such as calendars and diagrams, to texts which would be received incongruously by the solitary reader, such as some of the Old English sermons. It is true that a sermon cannot, in this scheme, form the true counterpart to a calendar, and a more balanced spectrum would take as its furthest aural extreme a work which could not meaningfully have been approached visually: since musical notation may survive only from the late ninth century\(^1\) and it was apparently not until after the mid-tenth century [...] that music-writing became established in Anglo-Saxon England\(^2\), one might cite songs as an example.\(^3\) However, we are here concerned only with works which survive in a textual form; semi-texts, such as music or runic inscriptions, can be included only at the most abstract and theoretical level.\(^4\)

Our concept of the intended manner of reception of texts does not, it should be stressed, reflect or correspond to the post-modern literary theory of indeterminacy: the action of the implied reader upon the text should not be understood either as his

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\(^{2}\) Susan Rankin, 'From Memory to Record: Musical Notations in Manuscripts from Exeter', *ASE*, 13 (1984), 97-112 (p. 97).

\(^{3}\) A literary approximation to this would be texts which substitute marks for the name of the relevant subject or of the person addressed, to be substituted by the reader (the lector) when delivering the work to his listening audience: such pieces would not strictly be meaningful if received literally or visually.

\(^{4}\) There is a growing bibliography for early medieval music: see especially Christopher Page, *Voices and Instruments of the Middle Ages: Instrumental Practice and Songs in France 1100-1300* (London: Dent, 1987) and idem., *The Owl and the Nightingale: Musical Life and Ideas in France 1100-1300* (London: Dent, 1989) and the references there cited.
function or as his role in the text. Indeed, if the investigation into the origins of a text is a secondary line of approach then the inquiry into its meaning is tertiary, depending not only upon the resonances of its style and vocabulary, which are chiefly revealed by an awareness of its sources and origins, but also on the identification of the use of the text. In Charles Martindale's formulation, 'meaning [...] is always realised at the point of reception', which must be our chief concern. We cannot suggest what the Anglo-Saxon reader 'saw in the text' without presupposing that his approach was visual rather than aural; we cannot deduce what he 'read into the text' without specifying what, for him, the act of reading entailed. It is precisely with the identification of the style of reading which was most likely to have been employed upon a given text that this thesis is concerned, only after which may it be possible profitably to discuss the Anglo-Saxon understanding of a vernacular text. As an illustration of the necessity of this order of priority let us take the categories of 'homily' and of 'saint's Life', using the terms not in their traditional and general senses but specifically to refer to texts for public delivery and for private reading respectively.

A homily would be received by its listening audience at, we may presume, about one hundred words per minute. Under such conditions there can be no possibility of interruption or of repetition, and the audience has little or no control over the text: 'if the hearer falls, let us say, five or ten seconds behind, he will lose the thread of discourse'. This form of reception contrasts with the approach to the saint's Life, where the solitary reader may re-read a passage, pause to contemplate a section or return to an earlier place in his copy. Such a form of reading is active, the former passive: 'an oral audience is limited in the number and type of interpretive manoeuvres that it can perform consciously on any given passage while the performance is still going on'. It is clear that these two examples are near-polarities: the action of the audience and the concept of the text in each case are exactly opposed to one another.

9 Ibid.
and our awareness of this must be the basis for any siting of meaning in the text, in the reader or in the interplay between them.

It is therefore unsurprising that few attempts have been made to apply the techniques of reader-response criticism to the Old English corpus; the premises upon which the work of such scholars as Hans Robert Jauss, Wolfgang Iser and Stanley Fish relies are simply not present for Anglo-Saxon studies. In our current understanding of pre-Conquest literary culture, speculations into the interplay of reader and of text may elucidate our own understanding of the texts, but can do little to increase our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon approach, which is the concern of this thesis. Indeed, the majority of recent articles by medievalists which concern reception theory seeks chiefly to overcome the difficulties inherent in applying Iserian terminology to the Anglo-Saxon material, a task hampered by the fact that the very name of reader-response criticism bears assumptions which misdirect towards private reading as strongly as the term 'homily' towards oral delivery. Neither is it sufficient to modify the phraseology to the cumbersome phrase of 'reader or hearers', a phrase which firstly suggests a binary and anachronistic opposition between reading and hearing, which secondly fails to distinguish between the several varieties of reading styles and which, thirdly, circumvents the very basis upon which reader-response criticism builds: the nature of the interrelationship between text and audience. It is wholly inadequate to speak of an 'Anglo-Saxon reader' in any but the most general terms without specifying which variety of that activity he used, a choice which is itself not constant but which might have varied for each text according to his perception of its value and his level of literacy, as well as to the conditions under which the act of reading would have taken place. Indeed, the several manners by which an Old English poetic text might have been composed, which have been the subject of vigorous

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scholarly debate, are paralleled by the variety of manners in which it could have been received: thus, in discussing the Anglo-Saxon understanding or use of a text we should refer not merely to the Beowulf-poet, for example, but also to the Beowulf-audience, whose actions may not have been identical either to those of the Wonders of the East-audience or to those of the Juliana-audience. While this thesis draws on the interests of reader-response criticism, therefore, it can seek only to establish a basis upon which the fuller and more provocative questions which reception theory generates can be built.

For this reason, the numerous terminologies which have been proposed by leading scholars in the field of reader-response criticism are at present unsuitable for use in Anglo-Saxon studies. Here, the term 'intended audience', or simply 'audience', will be used in order to designate the reader, readers or listeners whom the author or compiler of a given text expected to approach his work. This term may thus appear to resemble that of 'narratee', which Gerald Prince defined as 'someone whom the narrator addresses'; however, the latter term has connotations, or rather potentials, which should be avoided. As Prince writes:

The narratee can [...] exercise an entire series of functions in a narrative: he constitutes a relay between the narrator and the reader, he helps establish the narrative framework, he serves to characterise the narrator, he emphasizes certain themes, he contributes to the development of the plot, he becomes the spokesman for the moral of the work.13

In Old English texts, however, there seems little evidence for the narratee exercising these several functions. In texts such as Byrhtferth's Enchiridion the narratee is frequently addressed,14 usually in the passages which Byrhtferth seems to have regarded as being most difficult to understand; in this sense he 'helps establish the narrative framework'. Further, in texts such as the Tithing Homily of the Blickling book, it could be shown that the addresses to the audience at certain points in the argument serve to 'emphasize certain themes': however, such an exercise would be limited in both its application and its results. In many vernacular texts the audience is addressed and, occasionally, exorted, cajoled or even named; rarely is it called upon to characterise the narrator or to act as a spokesman. The wide range of functions which the narratee can serve, therefore, precludes our use of the term here.

A more precise distinction between the varieties of characterised audience is made by Ward Parks:

12 'Introduction to the Study of the Narratee', in Reader-Response, pp. 7-25 (p. 7).
13 Ibid., p. 23.
14 The text is discussed in ch. 2 below.
15 The text is discussed in ch. 3 below.
Separated from their expressive counterparts by the narrative account, lie three receptional structures: the narratee, the implied reader, and the reader in the real world. Like the author, the reader stands in a different level from the narratee whom, through his participation in the narrative act, he actualises.

Parks separates the textual environment, the 'universe of diegesis', from the 'real universe', locating the 'implied audience' on the borders between the diegetic world of the narratee and the 'real' world of the audience 'because [...] they [the implied audience and the implied storyteller] reside on the border between story and reality'.

This threefold distinction makes use of such borders because, as Parks suggests, there is a continuum between the identities: 'the narrator construct may project a narratee, and the audience must 'perform' the song performance by identifying with an 'implied audience' in order to receive the narrative message of the song'. While the real Anglo-Saxon audience is irrecoverable, therefore, we know that it must have identified through its actions with the implied audience, itself betokened by any narratee, in order to find meaning in the text. Hence, while we cannot deduce the personalities or the impressions of the real audience, being confined to the textual or diegetic universe, we may discern its actions with a high degree of certainty.

This statement is not intended to disregard the axiom of Walter J. Ong that 'the writer's audience is always a fiction', a definition which underlies much of the arguments of both Prince and Parks; however, while the essence of the audience must be fictional to the writer its behaviour is not, or is fictional only to a degree. Within limits, the author anticipates how his work is likely to be used and will reflect that use in his writing: thus, the texts which he intends for oral delivery will differ sharply from his works intended for study or for private reading. His audience is still fictional, but its actions are rooted in fact and are indicated, as well as guided, by the style of his text.

It is this basic conception of the audience which is most pertinent to Old English studies and which we shall investigate here: its interest for medievalists is twofold, being relevant both to historical and to literary scholarship. It is the former aspect

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17 Ibid., p. 518.
18 Ibid.
20 A study of the audience which lies on the borders between literary and historical scholarship is Ian Jack, The Poet and his Audience (Cambridge: CUP, 1984) which studies 'the nature of the reading public for which the poet wrote' (ibid., p. 2); unfortunately, his style of inquiry is made possible only by the relative abundance of materials for the eighteenth century and later.
which has attracted most attention, having been pioneered by Erich Auerbach in 1958 and continued in particular by Franz Bäuml: subsequent, the theoretical and anthropological work of such writers as Walter Ong, Jack Goody and Brian Street has also gradually been applied to the medieval period, as Rosamond McKitterick, Patrick Wormald, Michael Clanchy and Brian Stock have shown. However, the work of these scholars has been concerned primarily with such matters as the means of acquiring literacy in Anglo-Saxon England and with the respective levels of literacy among the nobility, the clergy and the laity. Such research, which is itself dependent on the limited information available concerning Anglo-Saxon educational practices and land documentation, or on the construction of parallels with the better-attested Carolingian or post-Conquest material, is of only indirect relevance to the vernacular literature with which we are concerned. Since, as we shall see below, it was not necessary to be able to read, and much less to write, in order to be part of the Anglo-Saxon audience, many of the findings of these scholars are of little benefit to our interests. Having identified a particular text as one which would have been approached through private reading, it is then only natural to speculate about who might have been in a position to read it: however, such an enquiry is a complex matter, depending firstly on the localisation of the provenance and on the dating of a text and secondly upon the available data for the society of the given place at the specified time. Such an investigation would be a painstaking process, applicable only to a small body of texts for which the relevant information is discernible, and cannot be undertaken for our general survey of vernacular literature.


23 It is impossible in one footnote to cite a meaningful selection of the several works of these scholars on early medieval literacy, the details of which are to be found in the bibliography to this thesis. Further, their work represents only a small selection of the scholarship on the subject: see the references cited by these scholars in each text. In addition, the work of scholars concerned with royal governance also closely bears on the subject: see for example Simon D. Keynes, 'Royal Government and the Written Word in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe, ed. by Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), pp. 226-57 and Pierre Chapais, The Anglo-Saxon Chancery: From the Diploma to the Writ, in Prisca Munimenta: Studies in Archival and Administrative History, ed. by Felicity Ranger (London: University of London Press, 1973), pp. 43-62. The quantity of such material renders futile any attempt to summarise the arguments of these scholars: however, neither would such an activity be pertinent to our research, as we discuss above.
which has attracted most attention, having been pioneered by Erich Auerbach in 1958 and continued in particular by Franz Bäuml:21 subsequently, the theoretical and anthropological work of such writers as Walter Ong, Jack Goody and Brian Street has also gradually been applied to the medieval period,22 as Rosamond McKitterick, Patrick Wormald, Michael Clanchy and Brian Stock have shown.23 However, the work of these scholars has been concerned primarily with such matters as the means of acquiring literacy in Anglo-Saxon England and with the respective levels of literacy among the nobility, the clergy and the laity. Such research, which is itself dependent on the limited information available concerning Anglo-Saxon educational practices and land documentation, or on the construction of parallels with the better-attested Carolingian or post-Conquest material, is of only indirect relevance to the vernacular literature with which we are concerned. Since, as we shall see below, it was not necessary to be able to read, and much less to write, in order to be part of the Anglo-Saxon audience, many of the findings of these scholars are of little benefit to our interests. Having identified a particular text as one which would have been approached through private reading, it is then only natural to speculate about who might have been in a position to read it: however, such an enquiry is a complex matter, depending firstly on the localisation of the provenance and on the dating of a text and secondly upon the available data for the society of the given place at the specified time. Such an investigation would be a painstaking process, applicable only to a small body of texts for which the relevant information is discernible, and cannot be undertaken for our general survey of vernacular literature.


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The relevance of the Anglo-Saxon audience for the literary and aesthetic understanding of the texts has also attracted a certain amount of scholarship. Paul Zumthor writes:

Throughout the Middle Ages, literary works (with few exceptions) functioned in "theatrical" circumstances, as means of communication between a singer or reciter and an audience - not between an author identified as such and an individual reader. […] In spite of the subtlety it often shows, in spite of its relatively small diffusion, the medieval literary work is much more similar to our modern mass-media art than to a literature destined for individual and solitary consumption.24

Zumthor here universally applies the receptional mode to which we alluded above: the passive listener who receives the text aurally as part of a mass audience and exerts little or no control over the work. However, while that style of reception has long been recognised as the intended manner of approach to several of the sermons of Wulfstan, archbishop of York, contemporary with this approach and not discussed by Zumthor was the contrasting style of private reading, typically assumed for the reception of the poems of Cynewulf.25 The medieval style of private reading, however, cannot be equated with the later habit of silent and rapid reading, a distinction which has been discussed by classical scholars since the 1920s with the publication of Josef Balogh's seminal article 'Voces Paginarum',26 shortly followed by G. L. Hendrickson's 'Ancient Reading'.27 Each scholar drew his material from classical texts, but generalised his conclusion to later periods: thus, Hendrickson stated that:

Throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages reading aloud was the general habit of the learned as well as of the unlearned. Silent reading was unusual, but in what degree exceptional or possible the evidence as yet collected does not permit us to say.28

This argument was continued by H. J. Chaytor, since the publication of whose From Script to Print in 1945 it has become commonplace to observe that the act of reading in the medieval period was not only a visual, but also an oral and aural, act. As Chaytor writes:

24 'From the Universal to the Particular in Medieval Poetry', MLN, 85 (1970), 815-23 (p. 817).
25 Scholars holding this view include Larry D. Benson ('The Literary Character of Anglo-Saxon Formulaic Poetry', MLA, 81 (1966), 334-341 (p. 334)); we return to this matter in detail in ch. 6 below.
28 Ibid., p. 193.
When we encounter anyone poring over a newspaper, and whispering the words to himself as he laboriously spells his way through the sheet, we set him down as uneducated. It is not commonly realised that this was the manner of reading generally practised in the ancient world and during the early days of Christianity [...]. This ancient practice was continued in medieval times [...] and the habit of mind which it implies deserves the notice of those who take in hand the editing of medieval texts.29

Here, Chaytor describes an aural, vocal or subvocal and 'laborious' activity which, he alleges, was 'generally practised'. However, this method of reception is not related either to the content of the text or to the ability of the reader, two important variables which Chaytor does not discuss and which give rise to three separate styles of private reading which are here confused and conflated, to the separation of which we shall now turn: silent reading, vocal reading and ruminatio.

We may begin with ruminatio, concerning which Jean Leclercq has written:

Reading and meditation are sometimes described by the very expressive word ruminatio [...]. To meditate is to attach oneself closely to the sentence being recited and weigh all its words in order to sound the depths of their full meaning. It means assimilating the content of a text by means of a kind of mastication which releases its full flavour. All this activity is, necessarily, a prayer. [To cite the twelfth-century Cistercian, Arnulf of Bohériss]: 'Thus there will be no need to go to the oratory to begin to pray, but in reading itself, means will be found for prayer and contemplation'.30

Ruminatio is thus a deliberately slow and carefully vocalised form of reading, which the reader undertakes from choice: whatever his level of literacy may be, he decides to read at a speed below that of his capability. Such an activity is clearly dependent on the reader's perception of the value of his text, for a form of reading which is effectively a prayer could be applied only to work with a spiritually uplifting content and would be unsuitable for, let us say, medical remedies or legal materials. This specific approach to

the text should not be confused with the slow, vocal reading performed by those who
could not read otherwise, and for whom such a style of reading had no connexion to
the nature of the work before them. This style shades by degrees from vocal to sub-
vocalic and finally into silent reading, the prerogative of the highly literate and the
application of which is uncertain.31 The two most unambiguous references to silent
reading were cited by Chaytor and may be repeated here: the first is the often-quoted
story of St. Ambrose of Milan in St. Augustine's Confessions:

When he [St. Ambrose] read, his eyes scanned the page and his heart explored the
meaning, but his voice was silent and his tongue was still. All could approach him
freely and it was not usual for visitors to be announced, so that often, when we
came to see him, we found him reading like this in silence, for he never read
aloud.32

The second is from Chaucer's The House of Fame:

Thou goost hom to thy hous anoon;
And, also domb as any stoon,
Thou sittest at another book
Tyl fully daswed ys thy look.33

While ruminatio was limited in its application by its unsuitability for profane and for
secular works, there seems as yet no clear way of determining whether silent reading
was deemed more appropriate for some styles of text than for others; we may at least
note that the application of these modes was a matter of individual choice as well as of
capability. The distinction between modes of reading based on the latter has been
discussed by Paul Saenger:

[... ] Books of hours proliferated in a new milieu composed of two types of reading
ability that have often been obscured confusingly under the modern term 'literacy'.

One reading ability I shall term phonetic literacy. Phonetic literacy was the ability to
decode texts syllable by syllable and to pronounce them orally. Such reading was

31 It is possible to over-state the distinction between silent and sub-vocalic reading, for 'silent reading,
like reading aloud, does involve the two speech areas of the cortex' (Insip Taylor and M. Martin
Taylor, The Psychology of Reading (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1983), p. 231); however, the
silent reader absorbs text at approximately twice the rate of the vocal reader (Pollatsek and Rayner,
Psychology of Reading, p. 190).
114 (Book vi, ch. 3).
closely related to oral rote memorisation [...] Alongside the ability to read phonetically, a second type of literacy existed. This facility, which I shall term comprehension literacy, was the ability to decode a written text silently, word by word, and to understand it fully in the very act of gazing upon it. Certainly, many clerics could read Latin with this degree of comprehension, and even a greater number of the laity and clerics who possessed only phonetic literacy in the Latin had comprehension literacy in the vernacular.34

It is difficult to apply Saenger's argument in medieval studies, since the speed of an individual's reading leaves no historical trace: the ability of the reader lies in the real rather than the diegetic universe and cannot be recovered.35 We may distinguish between texts for slow and for rapid reading: we cannot distinguish between texts intended for slow and for rapid readers. While a 'change in reading techniques [...] since the end of antiquity' is generally assumed,36 clear evidence for the nature and spread of that change is scarce and can be applied only with difficulty to specific individuals or to a specific time within the medieval period. We may presume the practice of silent reading in Anglo-Saxon England and possibly also an awareness of the practice not as a refinement of 'phonetic literacy' but as a separate style: we cannot affirm such propositions and in consequence cannot distinguish between texts intended for vocal or for silent reading.

Thus far, we have examined ruminatio, vocal and silent reading: three separate forms of reading which could be undertaken by individuals. Texts intended for these styles of reception were, by definition, confined to the literate few: however, it would be erroneous to view the literate group as comprising the entire Anglo-Saxon audience, since 'one person with the ability to read from parchment could then read aloud to many'37 and 'ready access to the written word is not to be equated with an ability to read and write'.38 As Ursula Schaefer states, 'it is unlikely that an early medieval poet

35 This caveat applies also to the interest of the reader: hence, Malcolm Parkes's distinction between the professional, the cultivated and the pragmatic reader is of little benefit to Anglo-Saxon studies at present (The Literacy of the Laity, in The Medieval World, ed. by David Daiches and A. Thorby (London: Aldus Books, 1973), pp. 555-77 (p. 555)).
composed poetry for such a small audience as the community of literates of the time,\textsuperscript{39} while Stock has observed that 'literacy is not textuality. One can be literate without the overt use of texts, and one can use texts extensively without evidencing genuine literacy'.\textsuperscript{40} We have already alluded to one form of non-exclusive or group reception: the mass audience at the delivery of a sermon. This category of reception divides into two separate styles: the verbatim and the impromptu. The former describes the mode of reception in which the speaker reads from his text to a listening audience, where the text is fixed and the speed of delivery, we may imagine, slow; the authority of the speaker's words derives from their written form and the speaker's role is limited to the oral transmission of the written text. As we shall see, this form of reception would also have been used for historical narratives and biblical texts, for which mistakes in delivery could have the status of errors and might well be apparent to an educated audience; such a style of delivery contrasts with the 'impromptu' style, in which the speaker memorised or familiarised himself with the text prior to its delivery and had the control over it to omit or to expand passages according to the reactions of his audience. There, authority would come not from the text, but from the speaker himself: the rate of delivery would be more rapid than that of the verbatim style and, from the perspective of the audience, the words could be seen as coming directly from the speaker, who identifies with and to a degree becomes the narrator of the text. His role is one of apparent originator rather than of transmitter, and that of the audience is also somewhat more active than in the former case, for the speaker has more freedom to adjust his text according to their reactions. Such a style of delivery would, we may presume, have been more appropriate for exhortative than for narrative texts, where the intended effect is to instil an emotional response rather than to transmit information.

Finally, there is a distinct form of reception which lies between private and public reception: group reading. This is essentially a more informal version of verbatim delivery, in which members of a group read to each other, quite possibly in turns, from a single text. As in verbatim delivery, the authority of the word lies in its written form rather than in the status of its speaker; however, as in impromptu delivery the audience plays an active part, possibly to the extent of controlling the speed of the delivery or of asking for the repetition or omission of passages in the text. This mode of reception is perhaps best understood as an extension of the vocal form of private reading, for if in private reading the reader understood the words as they were spoken, rather than as they were seen, then it would have been essentially immaterial whether it was his

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\textsuperscript{40} \textit{The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries} (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 1983), p. 7.
mouth or another's which voiced the text. This is the mode of reading described by Chaucer in *Troilus and Criseyde*:

[... ] He forth in gan pace,
And fond two othere ladys sete, and she,
Withinne a paved parlour, and they thre
Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
Of the siege of Thebes, while hem leste.
Quod Pandarus, 'Madame, God yow see,
With al youre fayre book and compaignie!' 41

In the case which Chaucer describes the text is a 'geste'; however, there is no reason to suppose that a saint's *Life* or indeed any other narrative prose text - as well as poetic works - could not have been delivered thus: as J. A. Burrow writes, 'sermons and devotional writings were [...] read aloud in the houses of the devout'. 42

We have now briefly described a number of separate and distinct modes of reading by which early medieval vernacular literature was approached by its contemporary audience. 43 Besides these, there are additionally the particular manners of reception used for liturgical and for educational texts, in which books played the specific and technical role of written counterparts to an oral activity: it is believed that the dictating of texts by the teacher to his students formed a significant component of medieval education, 44 while missals and certain prayers were designed less for reading than for recitation by a group of people in unison. Such texts were thus limited in their use to certain formal occasions in which their function was an integral if not crucial part of the event: a prayer-text is redundant in informational terms to those who have memorised its wording, while students need not possess the book from which their teacher reads. These technical modes of reception need not concern us to the same degree as those previously discussed, although it is necessary for the sake of completeness to be aware of them.

It is clear, therefore, that the act of reading in the Middle Ages was a complex range of activities, only a few of which would have been appropriate for any given text. In the following chapters, then, we shall determine which Old English texts, or which styles of texts, were intended to be approached by which style, or which group of

43 We shall examine each of these styles in further detail in chs. 2-6 below.
styles, of reading, in order to describe an Anglo-Saxon vernacular text not by what it contains but by what it did or was intended to do.\textsuperscript{45} Before outlining the argument which will be presented in detail below, we may cite one of the passages which Prince discusses in his 'Introduction to the Study of the Narratee' as a final clarification of our terms and as an example of the methods which will be employed in our estimation of the function of the Old English texts. As Prince writes:

In the very first pages of \textit{Le Père Goriot}, the narrator exclaims: "That's what you will do, you who hold this book with a white hand, you who settle back in a well-padded armchair saying to yourself: perhaps this is going to be amusing [...]." This "you" with white hands [...] is the narratee. It's obvious that the latter does not resemble most readers of \textit{Le Père Goriot} and that consequently the narratee of a novel cannot be automatically identified with the reader: the reader's hands might be black or red and not white; he might read the novel in bed instead of in an armchair [...] the reader of a fiction, be it in prose or in verse, should not be mistaken for the narratee.\textsuperscript{46}

In the example upon which Prince bases his argument, it is clear not only that Balzac is not addressing his audience, but that he is addressing a fictive construct. The narratee of \textit{Le Père Goriot} is given an identity: he is rich, 'egotistical and callous',\textsuperscript{47} and in terms of that personality, at least, he is far from being Balzac's intended or ideal reader. To assume that the intended audience, or even the actual audience, of \textit{Le Père Goriot} consists entirely of such characters would indeed be, as Prince notes, a confusion and an error. However, if we disregard the specific features which Balzac describes, such as the white hand or the well-padded armchair, we can nonetheless discern the behaviour of the actual audience behind the narratee: an audience made up of individuals, each of whom approaches the text singly and reads it privately. The opening passage of \textit{Le Père Goriot}, therefore, gives ample indications of the intended manner of reception: the work was intended, in the prime instance, for private reading; its intended audience was literate.

The anticlimax of this conclusion derives from our presuppositions about the form of the text: we effectively define the novel as a literary work intended for solitary reception and regard alternative approaches as unusual, if not in some way incorrect. Of course, our definition is historically bound, as we note in the following passage:

\textsuperscript{45} As our examination of \textit{ruminatio} shows, we cannot divorce content from receptional style; however, while the content of a text must affect our understanding of its reception it does not form the sole basis of our understanding.

\textsuperscript{46} Prince, 'Introduction', p. 9.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
The first Lord Stanley of Alderley [...] wrote to his sister how he read *The Castle of Otranto* to his party as they rowed from one of the Faroe Islands to another. The scene, he reported, 'was suitable to the subject. The fog just let us see the high rocks by which we rowed, and against which the sea broke into foam. We reached our ship ... sorry to leave off the story [...]'.

Despite passages such as this, which remind us that the reading of novels in the eighteenth century could be a social activity, we are aware that Horace Walpole primarily intended his work for solitary reading; the absence of the boat, the foam and the group does not deprive the text itself of any meaning intended by the author. For Old English texts, however, numerous scholars have observed that our silent and solitary approach may cause an incalculable loss of meaning. Jeff Opland writes:

In order to appreciate Cynewulf's art, an Anglo-Saxon would have had to possess a manuscript of Cynewulf's poetry; today, scholars all over the world can pick up an edition of that poetry and read it in the privacy of their own studies [...]. In order to appreciate the thane's art [referring to *Beowulf* ll. 867-74], not only would you have had to be present in Denmark on the morning after Beowulf's defeat of Grendel, but you would have had to be a member of the party that rode to the lake. Cynewulf wrote his poetry for readers: [...] the appeal of the thane's poem on the other hand is primarily aural [...] part of the total experience of the thane's poem for the audience might also have come through the sense of smell: the sweaty horses, perhaps, or the sandy plains.

Here, Opland describes two different ways in which an Old English work could be received and amply demonstrates that the universal application of the former mode to Old English texts markedly informs, or misinforms, our understanding. However, in order to produce the clearest possible contrast Opland compares the poetry of Cynewulf, which involves a play between the Roman and runic scripts and which he therefore presumes to have been intended for a private and visual approach, to a poetic description of poetic composition, the product of which is not cited by the *Beowulf*-poet. Thus, this contrast frustrates in practice what it enlightens in theory, forcing two unresolved and possibly insoluble questions: was there such a method of composition


in Anglo-Saxon England as that described by the *Beowulf*-poet and if so, could any of the surviving poetry be understood as its product. While our argument's concern with the reception of written texts rather than of oral works marginalises this issue, the possibility of text-free reception at a performance of a spontaneously composed work must form part of our understanding of the literary culture of Anglo-Saxon England developed and should briefly be discussed here.

In *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, Rosalind Thomas writes:

Modern study of Greek orality - perhaps even of orality itself - is founded on Homeric epic poetry. In a brilliant series of articles between 1928 and his untimely death in 1935, Milman Parry argued that Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were traditional oral poetry, the product of a long tradition rather than the creation of one poetic genius. Parry and his pupil Albert Lord turned to the contemporary illiterate bards of southern Yugoslavia in the 1930s and 1950s. Here they could see how an oral poet actually composed in performance and, in particular, how he used a traditional stock of set pieces, formulae and set themes to help him compose as he sang. Parry's detailed analysis of Homer seemed to reveal a similar system of traditional formulae: thus the Homeric epics were oral poetry. [...] The 'oral theory' or 'Parry-Lord theory', as it is sometimes known, has been applied to other poetic traditions of epic or archaic nature - Old Norse, Anglo-Saxon, African epic, Karakirghiz poetry, to name only a few.50

The earliest attempt to examine *Beowulf* in the light of the Parry-Lord understanding of the Homeric epics was made by Francis P. Magoun Jr. As John Miles Foley writes:

Aside from ancient Greek, the field that has seen the most sustained research on the Oral Theory has been Old English poetry. Spurred on by Lord's recently completed dissertation, Magoun presented in 1953 the first application of the Parry-Lord approach to Old English verse, 'The Oral-Formulaic Character of Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poetry'. Using Parry's definitions of *formula* and also of the substitutable frame which he called the *formulaic system*, Magoun carried out a formulaic analysis of lines 1-25 of *Beowulf*. His findings [...] proved, so he claimed, that *Beowulf* was an oral epic.51

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Scholars have grown more cautious in making such claims since the publication of Magoun's article; as Foley writes elsewhere, '[...]' hundreds of books and articles have appeared, some advocating the Theory [sic], some disagreeing with its methodology and conclusions [...], and many suggesting modifications [...].' Such literature has shifted the emphasis of the Parry-Lord theory:

Scholars have shown us that the Chanson de Roland and Beowulf, for example, have oral traditional characteristics: both texts demonstrate a formulaic phraseology, an inventory of typical scenes, and so on. If that information is not enough to prove beyond doubt their orality in the specific Parry-Lord sense of a guslar singing in a kafana, then so be it: certainly the demonstration of oral traditional characteristics is not entirely in vain.

As Foley notes, Old English poems can at best be termed 'oral-derived texts', since they survive only in written form. Further, 'Anglo-Saxon does follow its own set of traditional rules. And [...] what results is once again a spectrum of phraseology that resists reduction to a single model'. The reduction of Beowulf to its Ur-form is not of direct concern to us: our question lies rather with the intended manner of approach to the written Beowulf, a topic with which Parry-Lord theorists have not been concerned. Neither has the question of whether there was a tradition of composition-in-performance in Anglo-Saxon England and if so, whether its products survive as written texts, fully been answered: thus, we cannot assume that the vernacular texts represent written versions of works so composed. The Parry-Lord theory in its present, modified form indicates that there is an oral undercurrent, if not basis, to Anglo-Saxon vernacular poetry; however, these features may also be explained by observing that a

53 'Texts that Speak to Readers who Hear', in Speaking Two Languages, pp. 141-56 (p. 155).
55 Ibid., pp. 5 and 390.
56 Ibid., p. 5. However, Bäuml has convincingly argued that there is 'in the oral tradition, no such thing as an 'Urtext', since every recitation is an original' ('The Unmaking of the Hero', p. 88). The question is not of direct concern to us.
57 An exception to this is Foley, 'Reading the Oral Traditional Text: Aesthetics of Creation and Response', in Comparative Research on Oral Traditions, pp. 185-212. However, his suggested techniques are valid only for texts which are the certain product of composition-in-performance, an assumption which we cannot make for any Anglo-Saxon vernacular text.
58 The sheer number of articles in this area makes it impossible to cite a representative selection here. Summaries of the field, with bibliographies, are to be found in Alexandra Hennessey Olsen's 'Oral-Formulaic Research in Old English Studies: I', Oral Tradition, 1 (1986), 548-606 and 'Oral-Formulaic Research in Old English Studies: II', Oral Tradition, 3 (1988), 138-90.
culture or an individual new to the use of writing for non-technical purposes may not have modified the style from oral to written. Similarly, a text produced through dictation has a large oral component which will be reflected in the product, for a transcript is not a written composition.\(^59\) As Donald Fry wrote in 1975, 'a consensus seems to be emerging that written Old English poetry used oral forms, but no reliable test can differentiate written from oral poems'.\(^60\) There is no doubt that 'the demonstration of oral traditional characteristics is not entirely in vain', but neither need we doubt that the Anglo-Saxon vernacular literature represents a complex interplay of written and oral forms, the ramifications of which are only beginning to be analysed.\(^61\)

We are here confined to text-based literature, and just as music cannot be discussed here, so the harp-based songs of the scop play only an abstract role in this thesis;\(^62\) however, the Parry-Lord theory does, through its having raised awareness of the Anglo-Saxon audience, form an important background to the concerns of this thesis.

One particular feature of the Parry-Lord theory which will be mentioned in the course of our argument is the role of the formula, an important component of the Parry-Lord approach to the text. Since its first definition by Parry in 1930 as 'a group of words which is frequently employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea'\(^63\) its form and function have been revised a number of times: since we are concerned with Old English prose as well as poetry, we shall use the simpler definition of C. M. Bowra that 'a formula is a set of words which is used, with little or no change, whenever the situation with which it deals occurs'.\(^64\) Much early scholarship in the field of orality rested on the identification of formulae with oral composition, with the premise that the higher the incidence of formulae in a given work, the greater the likelihood of its having oral origins. As we have seen above, this assumption is no longer tenable: however, the comment of Bowra that 'formulae are important to oral improvised poetry because they make it easier for the audience to listen as well as for the poet to compose'\(^65\) remains valid. As we shall show in the

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\(^59\) Further, as Magoun has noted, the very act of writing was a form of self-dictation ('Oral-Formulaic Character', p. 460).


\(^62\) The same is true for works produced through composition-in-performance without the use of music: in Opland's words, 'this tradition of song was probably distinct from the tradition of poetry' (Anglo-Saxon Oral Poetry: A Study of the Traditions (New Haven, CT: YUP, 1980), p. 259).


\(^65\) Ibid., p. 226.
course of our argument, Bowra's statement may be reformulated as 'formulae make it easier for the audience to understand the written text as well as for the writer to compose', for reasons connected as much with the style or with the difficulty of the text as with residual orality or the means of composition: this, however, is to anticipate what is in any case a minor interest of our thesis. Instead, let us note merely that the means of composition of a text are of interest only insofar as they affect its reception and that where those means are oral and performative, their product is by definition ephemeral and of limited relevance to us.

To summarise: we have identified a spectrum of manners of reception in the early medieval period and in late antiquity, ranging from the wholly aural, such as music and composition-in-performance, to the wholly visual, such as non-phonetic marks and diagrams. We have also briefly discussed the two fields of scholarship to which our concerns are most closely allied, reception or reader-response theory and oral-formulaic studies, and have shown that while neither is directly applicable to our research, it is to be hoped that we shall offer an understanding of the Old English text which will facilitate the former and refine the latter in their application to Anglo-Saxon texts.

As we stated above, our understanding of the intended use of an Old English text will be determined by the references to the audience which the work contains or, where no such references exist, by analogy to works which contain such references. It is unlikely that a writer would address his solitary reader in the second person plural form of the pronoun (ge); it is unthinkable that he would address the group who would receive his work aurally in the second person singular (pu). We shall therefore examine all surviving Anglo-Saxon vernacular works for such addresses and identify the intended use of the text accordingly or, where none are present, according to the similarities which the given text bears to other, more readily identifiable works. In so doing other factors will be identified, such as narratorial characterisation, the use of runes and the presentation of dialogue. These features will grow in relative importance as we shift our focus from texts certainly intended for private reading or for oral delivery towards texts whose function is uncertain: however, the references to the audience will still form our principal source of data.

The appeal of this method lies principally in its simplicity and in the frequency of occurrence of its primary data and partly in the fact that it does not necessitate the examination of each text in its manuscript context. This is not to suggest that manuscripts are not a rich source of data for determining the use of the works which they contain:66 indeed, we shall on several occasions have cause to comment on such

66 It seems to be precisely on the evidence of the appearance of the manuscripts that Fred C. Robinson describes Beowulf, Waldere and the contents of the 'Caedmon manuscript' as texts to be read by the educated ('Beowulf', in Cambridge Companion, pp. 142-59 (p. 158)). While this demonstrates the value of examining the texts in their manuscript context, it is unlikely that we could go so far here.
features as illustrations or diagrams. However, palaeographic data must be approached with caution. Since, as we have shown above, reading was not necessarily a silent activity, the physical appearance of a text cannot in itself be taken as conclusive evidence of oral delivery and of purely aural reception. We cannot assume that because 'in Old English times literature was normally read aloud', or that 'because the alliterative line establishes itself in recitation, acoustically, that is, and not visually', it was therefore intended to be read out to a listening group: the solitary reader could have voiced the texts to himself and formed his own listening audience. Further, the punctuation of a manuscript is of only limited use in determining whether or not a text was to be delivered to an audience. In investigating the 'two-stress unit' feature in the writings of Wulfstan, Angus McIntosh wrote:

What emerged very clearly from an examination of the contributions of all five manuscripts [of the Sermo Lupi ad Anglos] was that there was almost no clashing; nearly all of the [punctuation] marks when entered into my transcript came at the end of my Hudibrastic lines.

While McIntosh drew back from identifying the punctuation, or 'marking', of a text with the manner in which it was to be approached, Rudolph Willard went further the following year in his analysis of the pointing in Ælfric's homily for the first Sunday in Lent. Having suggested that:

A priest reading aloud from this [MS Cambridge, University Library Gg. 3.28, pp. 293-98] codex in church would have had clear suggestions as to the thought divisions, and should have had no difficulty in modulating his voice [...].

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73 Ibid., p. 9.
he was hesitant to insist that this was necessarily the case: 'this care [in pointing] is natural in texts intended for liturgical use, to be read publicly, or at least aloud'.74 While it is certainly plausible that such punctuation would have been of great assistance in the oral delivery of the text, such delivery, again, could have been not to an audience but to the reader himself.75 It would therefore be unwise to view manuscript punctuation as more than circumstantial evidence for the reception of texts.76 The evidence of linguistic rather than textual features is thus not merely a simpler but a more reliable method of determining the use of a text. Of course, our contention that the nature of the intended audience of a given text is indicated by the references to the audience which it contains is not in itself novel: in 1936, Ruth Crosby wrote:

The chief characteristic of such literature [for a hearing rather than a reading public], and in fact the surest evidence of the intention of oral delivery, is the use of direct address not to the reader, but to those listeners who are present at the recitation.77

Despite the possibilities for research which this statement encourages its application has been severely limited,78 rarely extending beyond such observations as the following:

[Since an article for a confessor is] supplied with two sets of pronouns, first person plural and second person, this instruction could have been delivered either to the laity or to the clergy.79

At present, no systematic attempt has been made to subject the surviving texts to analysis according to the references to their audiences which they contain. While it is true that there is a large number of texts which lacks such features, most notably in the Old English poetry, the field is still surprisingly rich, as we may demonstrate most succinctly by example. The Old English Apollonius of Tyre closes with the epilogue:

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74 Ibid., p. 29.
76 While O'Keefe convincingly argues for the development of graphic cues as 'an index of the growing textualisation of literature, its separation from memory and performance' ('Graphic Cues for Presentation of Verse in the Earliest English Manuscripts of the Historia ecclesiastica', Manuscripta, 31 (1987), 139-46, (p. 139)), as we show below high textualisation implies, but cannot be equated with, visual reception.
77 'Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages', Speculum, 11 (1936), 88-110 (p. 100).
78 Sabine Volk-Birke discusses the rhetorical effect of sermons using certain pronouns in preference to others in her Chaucer and Medieval Preaching: Rhetoric for Listeners in Sermons and Poetry, ScriptOralia 34 (Tübingen: Narr, 1991), for example pp. 73-83, 100-03 and pp. 117-26. Since the basis of her argument is that the texts which she discusses were intended for oral delivery, however, she does not analyse the addresses at the basic, practical level with which we are concerned.
Her endat: ge wea ge wela Apollonius þæs tiriscan, ræde se þe wille. And gif hi hwa ræde, ic bidde þæt he þas awændednesse ne tæle, ac þæt he hele swa hwæt swa þar on sy to tale.  

As Goolden suggests, this may be compared to the proem to the Boethius:

Ond nu bit ond for Godes naman he halsæ ælcne þara þe þas boc rædan lyste, þæt he for hine gebidde, ond him ne wite gif he hit rihtlicor ongite þonne he mihte.

Similarly, we might cite the opening lines of the metrical epilogue to MS CCC 41:

Bidde ic eac æghwylcne mann,  
brego, rices weard, þe þas boc ræde  
and þa bredu befo, fira aldor,

or Bishop Wulfsige's preface to the translation of Gregory's Dialogues:

Se þe me rædan þencð teonð mid rihtum gedance.  
He in me findan mæg, gif hine feola lyste  
gastlices lifes godre bisene, [...]  
Bide þe se bisceop, se þe ðas boc begeat  
þe þu on þinum handum nu hafast ond sceawast,  
þæt þu him to þeossum halgum helpe bidde,  
þe heora gemynd her on gemearcude siendon.

These last verses describe the act of reading in some detail; the intended reader is addressed directly and described as holding the book in his hands, looking at it and later closing it. It will be noted that this description of the intended reader is quite as detailed as that given by Balzac in the passage from Le Père Goriot cited above, but that the Old English passage yields information about the actual intended audience and not merely about a construct such as a narratee. Lest it be suggested that the pious

81 Ibid., p. 62.  
characteristics which the poet ascribes to the reader are of a kind with Balzac's 'white hand', we may remember that for the Anglo-Saxons an ability to read was probably closely connected to a monastic education if not to a life in holy orders and that, as our examination of ruminatio shows, reading itself was connected to prayer.\(^85\) The deduction that the intended reader was religious is as anticlimactic as the inference that Le Père Goriot was intended for private reading. It is precisely information of this kind which is necessary for our reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon approach to the Old English text, and it is on passages such as these that we may base our analysis.

The vernacular prose is particularly suitable for such an investigation, partly because of the large quantities in which it survives in comparison to the poetry and partly because of its numerous addresses to its audience. These factors, in addition to the wide variety of forms which the prose can take, enable us to determine with some precision how a particular style of prose text was intended to be approached, according to the addresses to the audience which some of its representatives contain, to the features which they share with the remainder of the group and according to its differences from other groups. Having determined the intended manners of approach to the prose with as much accuracy as is possible within the confines of this thesis,\(^86\) it will then be possible to turn to the poetic texts, many of which bear few addresses to their audience and which are in consequence more difficult to categorise. It would, as we shall discuss at some length in chapter 6 below, be equally valid to investigate the poetic texts in association with the prose works to which they are most closely linked: however, for the reasons adduced above and for clarity, we have examined them separately. It is not, therefore, to be inferred that the members of the poetic corpus have a particular mode of reception merely because they are poetry: we are not postulating an opposition between the two literary forms.

Having now established the premises for our arguments and summarised our investigation, we may begin our discussion with the texts which are most likely to have been intended for private reading (the scientific, medical, botanical and magical pieces) and with those which were most probably delivered aurally to a listening group (the sermons), before turning increasingly to styles of text whose intended manner of

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\(^86\) Our chief constriction is the impossibility adequately of surveying the large corpus of texts in Latin produced in Anglo-Saxon England. An investigation of such texts would not only illuminate the vernacular texts but also enable us better to define the quality of the audience of vernacular literature: however, such a task cannot be undertaken here.
approach is uncertain: the saints’ Lives, the remaining prose and, finally, the poetry. Before this, however, there are three stylistic points which should be raised here.

Firstly, we should note the nomenclature used throughout the thesis. Few Old English texts bear titles in their original contexts, and while many have been given titles by their modern editors which are generally accepted, others still lack recognised titles. Those which are discussed below in detail are given working titles here: however, for reasons of clarity, the number assigned to each in A Plan for the Dictionary of Old English is cited in the footnotes. For consistency, I have therefore cited the Plan numbers for all texts even when, in such cases as Beowulf, their application is not strictly necessary, since the alternative would have implied an arbitrary distinction between texts on the grounds of perceived value.

Secondly, when quoting works in Old English I have in each case reproduced the punctuation and orthography of their most recent edition, preserving the Tironian sign or ampersand where they are used but omitting accent marks which, while being ‘valuable sources of information for modern scholars’, are not relevant to our interests at present.87

Finally, I have used the indeterminate third person singular, 'he', in preference to 'he or she' or to 's/he' throughout this thesis, partly because in terms of English grammar the masculine includes the feminine and partly for reasons of personal taste: it neither reflects nor indicates the actual gender of the referent.

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This chapter examines the computistical and scientific texts and demonstrates that their intended mode of reception was, most probably, private reading. It will be shown that in the first place many of these texts make use of diagrams, tables and of calendars: methods of presenting data which are self-evidently designed for visual appreciation and which are wholly unsuitable for oral delivery. Secondly, many short computistical notes, such as the pieces in MS CCCC 422, suggest by their addresses to the audience in the second person singular and by their brevity that they would have been unsuitable for use in a group audience environment. Thirdly, we show that Ælfric's De Temporibus Anni has numerous features in common with the shorter notes and that these similarities, as well as Ælfric's references to his audience, provide sufficient evidence for us to deduce that De Temporibus was intended for individual reception. Subsequently, we examine Byrhtferth's Enchiridion and suggest that while this exceptional author presents numerous and unique problems, his text may nonetheless be placed most easily into the 'solitary reader' category. Finally, we examine the medical, botanical and magical texts, such as Bald's Leechbook, and suggest that while some of the magical works might derive from or be intended for performance, and that the intended use of the medical works would by definition have entailed an audience (the patient), the actual texts of the recipes and charms were designed for individual reception.

With the exceptions of two lengthy computistical tracts, Byrhtferth's Enchiridion and Ælfric's De Temporibus Anni, the vernacular material on the computus consists of short and anonymous notes of some three to thirty lines, the number of which runs to over a hundred pieces. It would clearly be unnecessary to examine each of these, since their homogeneity of length, content and of language also extends to homogeneity in the area with which we are directly concerned: the addresses to the audience. The comment of S. J. Crawford that 'books written on similar subjects and within the same circle about the same time must always gather some amount of identical style or idiom' is here stretched to its extreme limits, since many of these texts deal with identical

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1 The number could be reduced by regarding texts as variants of each other rather than as separate pieces: since no text is ever repeated verbatim, however, for the reasons adduced below and for coherence it would seem wisest to regard each occurrence of a text as an individual item.

subjects and employ by necessity identical or near-identical language. We may therefore confine our investigation to the contents of one manuscript,\(^3\) a computistical miscellany containing numerous pieces which may be taken as representative: the preliminary quire to a missal which is now MS CCC 422. Most of this quire consists of diagrams and computistical tables; almost half of the quire is occupied by a calendar at one month to a page. These items, even when they contain embedded phrases rather than letters or symbols - such as the entries in a table for lucky and unlucky days of the moon\(^4\) or the glosses to the Latin names of the zodiac in the calendar\(^5\) - need not be investigated here, partly for reasons of space and partly because they contain no references to the audience: we may however comment in passing that calendars, diagrams and tables are a certain indicator of visual rather than aural reception. The texts with which we are concerned are found in the remaining spaces beneath tables or written as continuous prose on the pages following the diagrams. Some of these eleven texts,\(^6\) such as a five-line piece on fasting-Fridays,\(^7\) a thirty-three line menologium\(^8\) and a three-line note on the number of weeks, days and hours in the year,\(^9\) lack references to the audience. For example, the three-line note runs:

On twelf mon'um by\(6\) preo hund daga, and . V. and syxtig daga; and \(\varphi\)æra wucena synt twa and fifig; and \(\varphi\)æra tida eahta \(\text{husenda and eahta hund syxtig tida.}\)

Texts such as these contain no direct clues for their intended manner of reception and need not delay us: it is to the remaining texts, therefore, that we may now turn. Two are concerned with epacts; their similarity is so great that they were combined by their editor with the versions in two other manuscripts, as follows [Epacts I]:\(^10\)

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\(^3\) In citing these texts we shall provide their manuscript reference, Catalogue index and Plan number, owing to the difficulties of determining where the texts begin and end. This problem is specific to the computistical literature and in succeeding chapters we shall provide only the title and the Plan number.

\(^4\) MS CCC 422, p. 27; Ker 70B art. a; Plan B.23.2.2; Heinrich Henel, 'Altenglischer Mönchsaberglaube', \(Esin\), 69 (1934-35), 329-49 (pp. 334-35). This table contains both Latin and Old English, but the entries are so terse as to be of little interest to us: e.g., 'Luna XXIIIIBona est. Her hit is god tina'.

\(^5\) MS pp. 29-40; Ker 70B art. c; Plan B.24.4.1.

\(^6\) I am here following the division of the texts in Henel's edition (\(\text{Studien zum altenglischen Computus, }\)Beiträge zur englischen Philologie 26 (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1934; New York, NY: Johnson, 1967)), which the Plan follows; the Catalogue divides differently.

\(^7\) MS p. 47; Ker 70B art. f; Plan B.20.11.1.1; Henel, \(\text{Studien, }\)p. 64.

\(^8\) MS p. 48; Ker 70B art. g; Plan B.20.18.1; Henel, \(\text{Studien, }\)p. 71 (collated).

\(^9\) MS p. 49; Ker 70B art. h; Plan B.20.13.1.1; Henel, \(\text{Studien, }\)p. 67.

\(^10\) In order to facilitate our discussion and because the openings of these untitled texts are too similar for us to distinguish the texts by their opening lines, I have devised these titles. The name indicates the content and the number the position in our argument: thus, Epacts II would be the second piece mentioned concerning epacts. There is then no implication that Epacts I has any inherent priority outside this discussion.
Gif ǣn wille witan hu fela epacta yrnan on geare, ōonne wite ǣn hu eald se mona beo on XI. kalendas aprilis; forði swa fela nihta swa he eald bið, swa fela epacta yrnan on geare. Gif ǣn wile giman ǣises trametes, ōonne byst ǣn ǣe cleawra on gerimcræfte.11

The next text is the aforementioned calendar, for which the majority of the entries is in Latin. The notes to this calendar in Old English which are not glosses are concerned with the zodiac, with the number of days in the month or the lengths of the nights or, in the case of the entry for the eleventh of February, with birds: 'her onginnan fugelas to singenne'.12 As we noted above, these brief entries need not concern us. It contains only one address to the audience, in the entry for the twenty-eighth of February:

Ger. ōonne freolsa ǣn ōonne æftran dæg and nim syis ǣrne stæf to sunandæge.13

The next text gives the rules for finding Septuagesima, Lent and Easter [Rules I]:

Gif ǣn wille witan hwænne septuagessima beon sceole, ōonne findst ǣn hit her [...].
Gif ǣn wylle witan hwær halgan dæg beon sceole, ræd ōis eac [...].14

The remaining notes begin on page forty-six of the quire; from this point there are no further diagrams. These begin with two further methods for finding Septuagesima, Lent and Easter [Rules II and III]:

Gif ǣn ne cunne understandan on ōis ledene þe her beforan awritten is, ōonne loca ǣn her hu ǣn scealt þin gear rihtlice gefadian [...].15

Eac ic secge ǣtet ǣn ne ðearft næfre belucan alleluia ær quinti decima kalendas februarii [...]. Eac we secgæh be eastron, ǣtet hig næfre ne beð hig ǣnne

11 MS pp. 28 and 47; Ker 70B art. b and (part of) c; Plan B.20.2.1.1; Henel, Studien, pp. 48-49 (collated). The fact that this is a collated edition need not diminish its significance for these purposes; as is readily apparent from Henel's notes, the differences between the versions are slight and never affect the references to the audience which form our main interest. It should be noted that here and in the following examples from this quire the references to the audience are highlighted for reasons of clarity: the second person singular, in this example, is not emphasised in its manuscript presentation.

12 MS pp. 29-40; Ker 70B art. c; Plan B.20.14; ed. by Francis Wormald, English Kalendars before AD 1100, Henry Bradshaw Society 72 (London: Harrison, 1934), pp. 184-95 (p. 185).

13 ibid.

14 MS pp. 42, 43; Ker 70B art. d; Plan B.20.1.1.1; Henel, Studien, pp. 40-41.

15 MS p. 46; Ker 70B art. e; Plan B.20.1.1.2; Henel, Studien, pp. 42-43. There is no preceding Latin text in the MS.
Undecima kalendas aprilis, Ne ufor þonne septuagesima kalendas Maii.16

The next section is concerned with the emberdays [Emberdays]:

Git ic þe will seccan embe ða twelf ymbrendagas þe ure drihten sylf gesette ure lichaman to haele and ure sawle to ecere myrhē. ða man sceal fæstan swa swa man deð lenctenfæsten [...].17

and the next with Advent [Advent]:

Gif ðu wilnige rihtlice to wurðiende ADUENTUM DOMINI. þonne wara ðu þæt hit ne beo ær V kalendas DECEMBRIS, ne æfter .III. Nonas DECEMBRIS [...].18

These are followed by Epacts II, which closely resembles Epacts I, and then by five lines on concurrents [Concurrents]:

Gif hit is god þæt ðu wite hrædlcice hwic concurrentes yrne on geare. Loca hwile dæg cuma nona kalendas aprilis [...].19

while the last item, Age of the Moon, begins:

Gif ðu wilne witan hu eald se mona beo nu todæg on twelf monþum, þonne wite ðu hu eald he todæg sy and tel þarto endleofan [...].20

Three features are readily apparent from these excerpts. Firstly, all address the audience by the second person singular pronoun - ðu - or by the singular imperative - nim, loca: features which would be strikingly incongruous in a group-audience setting. Secondly, there are specific references to visual rather than aural reception: loca, 'ræd ðis'. Thirdly, we may note the recurrence of the opening phrase 'gif ðu wille witan' and its variants 'gif ðu wilnige rihtlice to wurðiende' and 'gif ðu ne cumne understandan'.21 As we noted above, formulae, especially of introduction or of closing, are a feature which numerous scholars have taken to denote composition-in-performance or oral delivery. The former is clearly impossible in the case of the computus: the latter is at least highly

16 MS, Ker ibid.; Plan B.20.1.1.3; Henel, Studien, pp. 45-46.
17 MS pp. 46-47; Ker ibid.; Plan B.20.10; Henel, Studien, p. 61.
18 MS p. 47; Ker ibid.; Plan B.20.1.1.3; Henel, Studien, p. 47.
19 MS, Ker ibid.; Plan B.20.2.1.2; Henel, Studien, p. 49.
20 MS, Ker ibid.; Plan B.20.6.1; Henel, Studien, p. 55.
21 Even following Ker's (non-)division of these texts we may use the term 'opening phrase': these phrases are all marked by a coloured capital G, in green or red, slightly larger than the main script.
improbable. We have now shown that these pieces, as their length,\textsuperscript{22} content and context reveal, would have been utterly unsuitable for oral delivery and cannot have been intended for non-visual appreciation. The phrases of introduction therefore do not indicate oral delivery: rather these phrases, as well as coloured initials, mark the ending of an item and indicate that a new rule is about to be described, a function which in the case of a subject as specialised as the computus would have been as necessary for the individual reader as for a group, aural audience. The phrases are indisputably markers and, in the definition of Bowra, formulae:\textsuperscript{23} however, it is both unnecessary and improbable to deduce oral delivery from them.

If we can now accept unreservedly that the computistical pieces of the Corpus missal were intended for the visual/aural reception of individuals, then we may make two further points based on these texts. The first concerns the use of the word 
secgan,
which we found in such phrases as 'ic Ḟe wille secgan' and 'eac we secgan' be eastron'. Although this verb literally denotes speech, it is apparent from the discussion above that this cannot be the case here, and we may infer that its semantic range had by this time enlarged to indicate written as well as oral communication, as in the modern English 'as we said above'. The presence or absence of the term 'secgan' is therefore without significance for determining the manner of reception of these texts.

The second point concerns narratorial references as indicators of reception. In the notes in MS CCCC 422, as well as in Ælfric's \textit{De Temporibus Anni}, Byrhtferth's \textit{Enchiridion} and numerous other texts, the narration frequently alternates between the first persons singular and plural.\textsuperscript{24} Some texts, such as \textit{Emberdays}, address the audience as Ḟu while referring to God as 'ure drihten'; this is not significant for these purposes, since God is obviously the drihten of the audience as well as of the author. Of more interest are the erratic authorial references in \textit{Rules III}:

\begin{quote}
[MS line 17] Eac ic sece Əzet Ḟu ne Əceart [...]
[MS line 22] Eac we secgæ be eastron [...]
[MS line 25] And ic wat, Ḟæt Ḟu næft [...]\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

It would appear from this piece, which is quite typical in this regard, that where the audience is addressed by the second person pronouns, the use of we or of ic is entirely without significance for the question of oral delivery: a point which will have greater

\textsuperscript{22} As we noted above in our introduction, the Parry-Lord theory is most generally applied to works of an epic nature, from and for which it was formulated.

\textsuperscript{23} It will be remembered that Bowra defined the formula as 'a set of words which is used, with little or no change, whenever the situation with which it deals occurs': cf. the introduction above.

\textsuperscript{24} I have found no occurrences of the dual pronoun in these texts.

\textsuperscript{25} MS p. 46; Ker 70B art. e; Plan B.20.1.1.3; Henel, \textit{Studien}, pp. 45-46.
relevance below but which is not wholly irrelevant to the argument at this point, since it closes one seemingly fruitful line of inquiry.

Having examined the contents of the Corpus missal and familiarised ourselves both with the computistical genre and with the features which are most significant for determining its probable manner of reception, we may turn to Ælfric's De Temporibus Anni, which survives in eight manuscripts. In one manuscript [G], the text is prefaced:

Her æfter fylig an lytel cwyde be gearlicum tidum. þæt nis to spelle geteald. Ac elles to rædenne. þam ðe hit licað.27

A portion of this preface also survives in B, which preserves only the phrase þæt nis to spelle ac elles to rædenne þam þe hit licað.28 While the methods which we have now developed will enable us to deduce that De Temporibus must have been intended for solitary reading, this passage alone forms a direct instruction that the tract, as it stands in MSS B and G, is not for oral delivery - 'nis to spelle' - but is to be read (rather than solely heard) by those whom it might interest - þam ðe hit licað.

Turning now to the main text of De Temporibus, it is readily apparent that none of its versions is rich in addresses to the audience: the G-text bears only four, all of which are in the singular. Two occur in the ninth paragraph of the seventh chapter:29

Gif ðu nelt hine tellan eac to þam monan swa swa to þære sunan. ðonne awægst ðu þone easterlican regol. 7 ælces niwan monan gerim ealles þæs geares.30

The third, in the twenty-seventh paragraph of the fourth chapter, runs:

Nu miht ðu understandan. þæt læssan ymbgang harð se man þe gæð onbuton an hus. ðonne se ðe calle þa burh begæð.31

26 In the following discussion I shall use Henel's abbreviations for the manuscripts (Ælfric's 'De Temporibus Anni', EETS on 213 (London: OUP, 1942), p. ix). For ease of reference they are repeated here: A = MS BL Cotton Tiberius A. III; B = MS BL Cotton Tiberius B. V; C = MS CCCC 367; D = MS BL Cotton Titus D. XXVII; E = MS BL Cotton Caligula A. XV (first text); F = MS BL Cotton Caligula A. XV (second text); G = MS Cambridge, University Library Gg. 3.28; H = MS Vatican Regiensis Lat. 1283.
27 Henel, De Temporibus Anni, p. 2.
28 Ibid.
29 Henel (ibid., p. lvii) notes that 'the division of the text into chapters and paragraphs is found in MS G. 'Chapters' are marked by red headings in half-line spaces, 'paragraphs' by red shading of capital letters'.
30 Ibid., p. 56.
31 Ibid., p. 32.
The last reference to the reader in the G-text is a singular imperative in the third paragraph of the sixth chapter, 'wite nu forði [...].' However, this was amplified in its fragmented version in F to 'wite þu nu [...],' and the fact that it is a singular rather than a plural imperative is still significant for our purposes. These four references, when taken with the preface which specifically forbids public reading and the absence of plural addresses, provide sufficient evidence for our deducing that De Temporibus fits the 'solitary reader' model, despite the absence of such clear indicators as tables and diagrams.

The A-version, like the D-text, places the first chapter of De Temporibus at the end of the tract. In the latter recension we also find a colophon which is identical to many closing phrases in sermons:

[…] þam sy wuldor 7 lorf mid ðæder. 7 halgan gaste. on ealra worulda woruld a butan ende. amen.35

The colophon is extremely important for us, because it is precisely such closing doxologies which have been taken by some scholars as proof of oral delivery: however, as we may now demonstrate, such an interpretation is ill-founded.

Heinrich Henel suggested that both the B- and G-texts, which contain the prefatory instruction that De Temporibus is not to be used for oral delivery, 'go back to a book which contained the [Catholic] Homilies as well as De Temporibus Anni, that this book was written under Ælfric's supervision, and that it had his warning against confusing the Homilies, which are sermons, with De Temporibus Anni, which is not a sermon'. However, Henel continued, the A and D manuscripts represent attempts to turn the tract into a sermon and to this end transferred the initial chapter, 'because the end of this chapter with its mystical interpretation of sun, moon and stars made a finer peroration for a sermon than does the sober exposition of meteorological phenomena with which the treatise ends in the original (i.e. Ælfric's) arrangement'. The rearrangement 'cannot be the work of Ælfric himself, because it is carelessly done', and Henel suggests that 'A and D, written after Ælfric's time, [derive from a] prototype

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32 Ibid., p. 44.
33 Ibid.
34 MS A contains a miswriting of ū for ða' in 'æ ða ðereiscan ðeoda' (ibid., p. 30): this is evidently irrelevant for us.
35 Ibid., p. 16.
36 Ibid., p. xlviii.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
[which] regarded *De Temporibus Anni* as the last sermon in the Second Series of Homilies.\(^{39}\)

Henel here bases his argument on the very feature which we are questioning: that a text with a doxology as an ending must be a homily or sermon, or must at any rate have been intended for oral delivery. The presence of the colophon in MS D has clearly led him to assume that *De Temporibus* was transformed into a sermon and, since it shares a rearrangement with MS A, that the rearrangement is linked to the attempted transformation, which must have been performed at an earlier stage such as MS *ACDEF*.\(^{40}\) If we doubt the significance of the 'homiletic' ending, however, we find a simpler and rather different explanation for the rearrangement of the treatise.

In MS G, *De Temporibus* follows the Second Series of the *Catholic Homilies* and a prayer which opens 'ic ðAncige þam ælmihtigum scyppend'. After the prefatory remark concerning oral delivery, the text begins:

\[
\text{Ic wolde eac gif ic dorste gadrian sum gehwæde andgit of ðære bec þe BEDA se snotera læreow gesette. 7gegaderodeof manegra wisra læreowa bocum [...].}^{41}\]

The *eac* in this introduction thus depends on the order of texts in MS G: it is not meaningful in MS B, where *De Temporibus* follows calendars and tables. No such problem arises in the version of MS A, however, where the chapter 'De Die' is placed at the end.\(^{42}\) The chapter 'De Niue', which is the thirteenth and final chapter in MS G, ends with 'sy þeos gesetedyns þus her geendod' and is followed by one more chapter, linked by 'ic wolde eac gif ic dorste': the *eac* ties in perfectly with the apparent ending of the text in the previous line, so that 'gif ic dorste' may be understood as an expression of humility regarding Ælfric's position relative to Bede's, as in MS G, and as an apology for perhaps wearilying the reader. Further, the chapter 'De Die' is a self-contained unit and can thus be transposed without loss of sense; even in the original ordering of the text there is a break of thought and of argument between the end of 'De Die' and the opening of the next chapter, 'De primo die sæculi siue de equinocio uernali'. Finally, the subject of this second chapter seems appropriate as an opening chapter in its own right. In comparing the versions in MSS B and A, therefore, it is the unaltered version in MS B which strikes one as being more ill-fitting than the restructured version in MS A.

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\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. xlix.

\(^{40}\) Following Henel's diagram for the relationships of the surviving MSS (ibid., p. xxxviii).

\(^{41}\) Ibid., p. 2.

\(^{42}\) It should be noted that the '[first] chapter-heading DE DIE [is] omitted in all MSS' (ibid., p. 2), but was added by Henel. We use it here to avoid the confusion of referring to 'the first chapter at the end'.
We are left with MS D, the text which has the 'homiletic' colophon which led Henel to suppose that the restructuring had been carried out in an attempt to make *De Temporibus* more suitable for oral delivery. Such a possibility is highly unlikely, however: the manuscript, which 'was the personal property of Ælfwine', contains private devotions and computistical rules, similar to those of the Corpus missal, in both Old English and Latin, as well as calendars, three full-page illustrations, tables and diagrams. Amid the texts, all of which address the audience by the second person singular, is the restructured *De Temporibus*, beginning with the heading 'De primo die Seculi' and continuing to 'sy þeos gesetnys þus her geendod'. This is followed by 'De Temporibus Anni. I. Beda se snoterlareow', omitting the injunction about reading and the apologetic 'ic wolde eac'. The chapter 'De Die' is then presented in full, ending with:

*Næðe ure nan nan leocht ænigre godnysse buton of Cristes gife. se þe is sótre rihtwisnysse sunne gehaten. þam sy wuldor 7 lorf mid fæder. 7 halgan gaste. on eaþra worulda woruld a butan ende. amen.*

Firstly, we may note the numeral in the opening line of the first chapter. The chapter is concerned with the first seven days of creation, and in MS D the beginning of each day is marked with a numeral in the margin. It is obvious that such numerals could not have been intended to be read out, since they are in the margins rather than integrated in the text and further, none of the pieces in this manuscript is suitable for oral delivery. It therefore seems incontrovertible that the first chapter of *De Temporibus*, which as we have already noted is a self-contained unit, has been presented in this manuscript as a piece for meditation and private devotion, perhaps through the *ruminatio* style of reading which we considered above. The colophon may then be seen as an appropriate ending for a passage for private reading as well as for a sermon. There seems, therefore, no reason to suggest that either the main text or the first chapter of *De Temporibus*, or indeed any of the pieces in MS D, were intended or would be suitable for oral delivery.

We may now summarise our examination of *De Temporibus Anni*, which survives complete in four manuscripts. In G, it is separated from the Second Series of *Catholic...

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43 Ibid.
44 The manuscript has been edited, with extensive commentary, by Beate Günzel (*Ælfwine’s Prayerbook: London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xxvi + xxvii*), Henry Bradshaw Society 108 (London: Boydell, 1993).
45 Ibid., p. 16.
46 Although it is in general ill-advised to judge a text on the basis of its surrounding items, since the rationale behind many miscellanies is obscure, it can be possible for private manuscripts whose owners are known, such as MS BL Cotton Titus D. XXVII.
47 Cf. the introduction above.
Homilies only by a short prayer, so that in order to avoid any misunderstanding an introductory passage was added to clarify that the text was not for oral delivery to a group. The next best text, in MS B, preserves part of this introduction as well as the opening phrase 'ic wolde eac [...]'. While showing fidelity to the exemplar, this opening is both nonsensical and ill-fitting in its new MS context. The compilers of A and of D, or of their common exemplar MS *ACDEF, transposed the first chapter, perhaps precisely in order to avoid this problem, while the scribes of D, working under the direction of *Elfwine,48 added a colophon to the first chapter as well as marking the days of creation in the margin in order that it should better serve for private and meditative reading. There is no reason to suppose that De Temporibus was intended for oral delivery in any of its forms; rather, as the references to the audience in all recensions, the introductory directive in MSS B and G and as the additions in MS D indicate, there seems no doubt that it was in all cases intended to be read privately. If we accept this, then we may further deduce that a 'homiletic' colophon or ending doxology is in itself insufficient evidence for oral delivery to a group; further indications are necessary for such an inference.

Having now examined texts for which there can be little doubt about their intended use, we may turn to the most lengthy computistical tract of the Anglo-Saxon era: the Enchiridion of Byrhtferth of Ramsey. This text presents the unusual problem of having not too few references to its intended audience, but rather too many: the audience is variously addressed as 'la cleric',49 'la arwurða leormingeniht', 'wurðfulla wer', 'þu geonglic', 'la wynsuma leornere', 'la rædere', 'arwyrðe preostas', 'la broðer' and 'la arwurðan gebroðro'.50 It is clear that these addresses are not only varied but contradictory, ranging from the secular to the clerical and from the singular to the plural: there is a corresponding variety in the Latin portions of the Enchiridion, ranging from 'ut tibi in aure dicor' to 'dignissime uir' and from 'O lector' to 'audientes':51 again, Byrhtferth switches between the singular and plural, sometimes within one passage.

This mass of conflicting indicators of the function of the Enchiridion has attracted the notice of numerous scholars. While there is to my knowledge no research dealing specifically with this topic there have been many suggestions, ranging from the precise comment of Michael Lapidge that it is 'a didactic treatise partly in Latin, partly in Old English, which attempts to explain the complexities of computistical theory to an untutored audience':52 to more elaborate claims for it as a textbook or lecture series for a

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48 The compilation of the manuscript is discussed in Günzel, *Elfwine's Prayerbook*, pp. 3-9.
50 Ibid., pp. 30, 54, 70, 74, 76, 100, 104 and p. 136 respectively.
51 Ibid., pp. 18, 54, 208 and p. 232 respectively.
specific audience.\textsuperscript{53} Since the actual use of the \textit{Enchiridion} was never the focus of these scholars, however, no supporting evidence is provided for their arguments: as we shall show, the text does not demand so complex an interpretation. Firstly, we may note Byrhtferth's extensive use of diagrams, a feature which is a certain indicator of visual rather than solely aural reception. These diagrams are frequently introduced by prefatory comments, most of which, as we should expect from our examination of the Corpus missal, refer to the audience in the singular:

Her we hig wylla\textsuperscript{a} amarkian, \text{n}\text{a} epactas 7 eac \text{n}\text{a} regulares luna\text{r}es, \text{n}\text{a}t hig openlicre 7 orpedlice standun beforan \text{n}\text{a}s preostas gesy\text{h}\text{e}, \text{n}\text{a}t he mäge butan geswynce heora geryna ascru\text{tn}ian,\textsuperscript{54}

or: 'ealle \text{n}\text{a}s \text{p}ing we wylla\textsuperscript{a} her amarkian, \text{n}\text{a}t se iunga preost mäge beon \text{n}\text{e} wis\text{r}a, \text{n}\text{e} he \text{n}\text{a}s \text{p}ing gesy\text{h}\text{e}'; 'hawa \text{n}\text{u}, estfulla preost, hwylc \text{n}\text{i}sra stafa beo on dæg [...]' and 'la wynsuma bro\text{ð}or, gym \text{n}\text{i}sse\text{h} hwio\text{l}es'.\textsuperscript{55}

Some prefatory comments, however, are in the plural:

[...\text{} sed libet prius circulum zodiacum hic insigniri cum duodecim signorum nominibus, et duodecim mensium appellationibus, ut lectoris [sic] meus uideat prec oculis ea que dicimus,\textsuperscript{56}

and: 'He [God] eac mid his agenre mihte geglessde \text{n}\text{a}t ger mid feowrum gesceaf\text{t}um swa \text{n}\text{is} ge\text{f}e\text{g} æ\text{t}wy\text{s} eallum \text{n}\text{e} hyt sceawia\text{ð}', as well as: '[...] swa \text{n}\text{a} fotstanas wynsumlice geswutel\text{s} \text{n}\text{a}m \text{n}\text{e} hig sceawia\text{ð}'.\textsuperscript{57} These plural addresses cannot be understood literally, for it is self-evident that diagrams cannot be read aloud or viewed by a group, particularly in consideration of the intricacy of these drawings, their integration in the main text and the presence of writing within them. It is therefore apparent that there must be a different interpretation of these addresses which, as we


\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., pp. 86, 160 and p. 162 respectively.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., pp. 6-8.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., pp. 10 and 90.
shall see below, reflect the extreme degree of Byrhtferth's concern with his audience rather than an unusual approach to the *Enchiridion*.

Byrhtferth specifically states that he is writing the *Enchiridion* for more than one audience:

> We gesetton on þissum *enchiridion* [...] manega þing ymbe gerimcraeft, forþon we woldon þæt iunge men mihton þe leothlicor þæt Lyden ongitan [...]. Herefter we þencalþ iunge mynstermen to gegretanne [...].

and perhaps the most characteristic Byrhtferthian feature is his apologising to one sector of his audience for describing matters which it already knows. For example:

> Manega þing we mihton of þeodwitone gesetynysse herto geicean; ac forþan þe we witon þæt þas þing þincalþ clericum 7 uplendiscum preostum genoh menigfealde, nu wille we ure spræce awendan to þam iungum munecum, [...] we byddaþ þa boceras 7 þa getydde weras, þe þas þing fulfremedlice cunnon, þæt heom hefelice ne þince þas þing þe we medomlice iungum cnihtum gesettatþ 7 sendaþ.

Byrhtferth therefore imagined numerous groups, both young and old and within and without holy orders, reading his *Enchiridion*. Clearly, however, they could not have approached it in groups, as the addresses in the second person singular suggest and as the use of diagrams proves. Rather, the *Enchiridion* was intended to be read privately by various individuals at separate times. There is nothing unusual about this: as we have seen, it is true for at least three recensions of *De Temporibus Anni* and presumably also for MS CCCC 422. The exceptional feature of this text is Byrhtferth's intense concern with these 'various individuals', the prospective readers of his work, and his evident need to speak to them directly. Thus, he refers to them not only in rhetorical asides, as to the *boceras* and 'getydde weras' above, but also in personal and intimate terms: 'ut tibi in aure dico', 'ic sece þe, la cleric, on þin eare', 'understand þu geonglic þæt ic wyþ þe nu gerunige' and '[...] quod tu, O lector, audiens'.

Since any further investigation into Byrhtferth's addresses would lead us not only into an analysis of the educational practices at Ramsey but also into an unprofitable

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58 Crawford, ibid., p. 132 (his italics).
59 Ibid.
60 The exception to the *De Temporibus* case is MS BL Cotton Titus D. XXVII, Henel's MS D, compiled for the personal use of Ælfwine.
61 Crawford, ibid., pp. 18, 20, 70 and p. 208 respectively.
discussion of the 'imagined defects of his supposed character',\textsuperscript{62} we may simply regard Byrhtferth as fulfilling the axiom of Walter Ong:

The writer's audience is always a fiction [...] The writer must set up a role in which absent and often unknown readers can cast themselves.\textsuperscript{63}

For Byrhtferth, this comment is literally true and actually practised, and it is this realising of Ong's statement which provides the most satisfactory explanation for his numerous direct addresses. We may therefore accept that the Enchiridion, like the other texts which we have examined thus far, was intended for private reading, despite its plural addresses to the audience: its peculiarities may be attributed to its author's extraordinary concerns with his readership and with his own role as teacher and as writer, as well as to his fascination with writing as a means of communication with an unknown audience. There is thus no need to regard the Enchiridion as a lecture-series or text-book, since the former necessitates oral delivery, which we have shown to be impossible, while the latter is in a general sense true for any tract and is a designation which does not further our understanding of the text. We may, then, most easily take the Enchiridion at its face value, as 'a didactic treatise partly in Latin, partly in Old English, which attempts to explain the complexities of computistical theory',\textsuperscript{64} belonging to the same category of reception as the texts which we have discussed above.\textsuperscript{65}

Having now examined the two major computistical tracts of the Anglo-Saxon period as well as a representative sample of shorter pieces on the computus, and having shown that these texts must have been intended to be approached by private readers rather than by group audiences, we may turn to the remaining scientific texts. Firstly, however, we must briefly address the question of terminology, since there is an inherent anachronism in the three-fold categorisation of these texts as 'botanical, medical and magical', aptly demonstrated by Bald's Leechbook, the most prominent medical work of pre-Conquest England. While the majority of the pieces are medical recipes, there are 'charms and directions for the use of charms scattered among [them]'\textsuperscript{66} as well as a considerable amount of botanical information, and there seems no reason to consider that its authors or compilers found this incongruous. In order to

\textsuperscript{62} Keynes, 'A Tale of Two Kings: Alfred the Great and Æthelred the Unready', \textit{TRHS}, 5th series, 36 (1986), 195-217 (p. 217), where this remark is used of Æthelred.

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Orality and Literacy}, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{64} Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth and the \textit{Vita s. Ecgwini}', p. 337.

\textsuperscript{65} The fact that the Enchiridion approaches lucidity only when read in conjunction with a computus further supports our argument (Baker, 'Byrhtferth's \textit{Enchiridion} and the Computus in Oxford, St. John's College 17, \textit{ASE}, 10 (1982), 123-42): only an individual reader could view two texts simultaneously.

\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Catalogue}, p. 332.
resolve the difficulties of nomenclature we shall use the term 'botanical' to describe the texts, since a concern with plants forms a common topic to these pieces.

We may begin with the most extensive surviving Anglo-Saxon botanical text, for which three manuscripts are extant: the Pseudo-Apuleius: *Herbarium, Medicina de Quadrupedibus*. One would naturally expect a work concerned with healing to be intended for private reading, or perhaps one might say for reference, and such a view is supported by several features. Firstly, all three manuscripts have an index for the location of the cures in the text: an index is self-evidently for the use of the solitary reader. Secondly, these three MSS contain drawings of the plants with which the text is concerned; these are an integral and necessary part of the text and could not be used for oral delivery. Thirdly, the cures are short pieces, usually of no more than two or three lines in their printed editions, similar in both length and format to the notes of the Corpus missal; as we have noted above, such a style of text is inherently unsuitable for oral delivery. Finally, the references to the audience in the *Herbarium* address it exclusively in the second person singular, whether by the pronoun, as in the entry for mandrake:

\[ \text{peos wyrt mandragora hys fremful; heo on niht scine\textsuperscript{o} healso leohfæt [sic]; } \]
\[ \text{\textit{\textup{\textit{pu hure heafod ærest geso panne bywyrt \textit{\textit{pu hy wel ræe mid ysene \textit{\textit{pe læs heo \textit{\textit{pe attfleo},}}}]}]}]} \]

or by the singular form of the verb, as in the entry for hemp:

\[ \text{\textit{\textup{\textit{Wi\textsuperscript{s} inno\textsuperscript{e}es sare genim \textit{\textit{pas ylcan wyrte, syle drincan, heo \textit{\textit{æt sar genim\textsuperscript{o}}},}}]}]} \]

The same is true for the *Medicina de Quadrupedibus*, using either the pronoun:

\[ \text{\textit{\textup{\textit{Wi\textsuperscript{s} cyrmlu, patella, \textit{\textit{æt ys heortes heagospind, gif \textit{\textit{pu hafast mid \textit{\textit{pe, ne arisa\textsuperscript{o} \textit{\textit{pe cyrmlu [...]}}}}}]}}]}]} \]

or the singular form of the verb:

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68 Although this is, strictly speaking, two texts, they are usually discussed together and it would seem pedantic to separate them here.

69 De Vriend, ibid., p. 171.

70 Ibid., p. 72.

71 Ibid., p. 242.
It would seem unnecessary to give further examples; the singular references, when taken with the points raised above and with the fact that there are no plural addresses whatever, seem sufficient for our contention that the texts were intended for solitary reading. If we can accept this without reservations, then we may make two further points from this text. The first concerns the use of opening formulas, a feature which was discussed earlier as an apparent indicator of oral delivery. It will be remembered that there were opening formulae to the computistical texts in the Corpus missal, most commonly of the form 'gif þu wille witan', but that they were not in any way connected with oral delivery. The same is true for the botanical pieces: there is a standard opening of 'wiþ [name of disease]' or of ef, but since oral delivery is impossible - or at least, highly improbable - for these texts, these must simply be a standard introduction serving to mark the ending of one cure and the beginning of another. Once again, then, we have noted that a recurrent opening phrase, or Bowran formula, is insufficient evidence for deducing the intended method of approach to a text.

The second point concerns the Latin bases and sources, an issue which has some relevance to the majority of the texts discussed in this thesis and which is most important for texts which are translations into the vernacular from a Latin original, such as the *Herbarium*: it may be argued that if the features with which this discussion is concerned were taken over wholesale from their Latin bases then their significance for Anglo-Saxon literary reception is greatly diminished, since they are more indicative of the Anglo-Saxon approach to Latin texts than of the approach to texts in the vernacular. While reasons of space forbid our discussing all vernacular texts in relation to their sources, it would seem wise here to touch on the Latin sources of the *Herbarium* and the *Medicina de Quadrupedibus* before returning to our examination of the botanical texts.

The history of the numerous works from which the compilers of the Old English *Herbarium* drew is complex: as de Vriend wrote, 'the extremely complicated textual tradition of the three Latin treatises which constitute the enlarged [Latin] *Herbarium* has been the subject of a number of authoritative studies [... but] many problems have remained unsolved'.

72 Ibid., p. 266.
73 Ibid., p. 1. For a full discussion of the Latin sources of the *Herbarium* and the *Medicina de Quadrupedibus* see ibid., pp. xli-xlviii and the references there cited; cf. also M. L. Cameron, 'The Sources of Medical Knowledge in Anglo-Saxon England', *ASE*, 11 (1983), 135-55 (pp. 149-50) and the references there cited; idem., 'Bald's *Leechbook*: Its Sources and their Use in its Compilation', *ASE*, 12 (1983), 153-82; idem., *Anglo-Saxon Medicine*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England
would form an unprofitable digression; it would seem sufficient merely to compare some of the Latin parallels with their Anglo-Saxon counterparts. For example, the passage which in the Latin version from MS Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Vossianus Latinus Q. 9 reads:

Herba acorum. Nascitur locis cultis et hortis aratis. Legis eam mense Augusto,\(^{74}\)

is transformed in Anglo-Saxon in MS Harley 6258 B to read:

De veneria id est beowyrt. \(\psi\)eos wyrt \(\hat{\text{p}}\)æt man on Ledene veneriam 7 Engle beowyrt \(\hat{\text{hæt}}\) \(\hat{\text{p}}\)u scealt nime on \(\hat{\text{p}}\)an mon\(\hat{\text{p}}\) \(\hat{\text{æt}}\) man Augustes nemne\(\hat{\text{ð}}\),

and in MS BL Cotton Vitellius C. III as:

Beowyrt. \(\hat{\text{De}}\)os wyrt \(\hat{\text{p}}\)e man on Leden ueneriam 7 on ure ge\(\hat{\text{p}}\)eode beowyrt nemne\(\hat{\text{ð}}\),

heo \(\hat{\text{b}}\)\(\hat{\text{i}}\) cenned on begunum stowum 7 on wyrtbeddum 7 on mædum; 7\(\hat{\text{p}}\)as wyrt \(\hat{\text{p}}\)u scealt niman on \(\hat{\text{p}}\)am mon\(\hat{\text{ð}}\)e \(\hat{\text{p}}\)e man Augustum nemne\(\hat{\text{ð}}\).

It is clear from this example that the Latin passage has been drastically transformed as well as translated:\(^{75}\) the Old English versions are not 'only a transposition of a given written exemplar in another written code'.\(^{76}\) The Vitellius text provides copious extra information concerning the location of the herb, and both vernacular texts use relative clauses to name the month: thus, the laconic note of the Latin has been fully expanded and it would be wiser to refer to the Latin 'base' of the passage than to its 'source'. As this example shows - and similar cases can be discovered on every page of de Vriend's edition - the vernacular versions in each case exhibit a reworking and an expansion of their terse bases. These botanical texts are in no sense strict translations and therefore, the presence of the second person singular in the Latin sources does not present a problem; so much else was altered in the translation that the pronouns would certainly have been adjusted if necessary.

A similar argument may be presented for the computistical texts, as we may demonstrate for Prognostic, which occurs in the computistical miscellany MS BL

\(^{74}\)This and the two following passages are from de Vriend, ibid., pp. 50-51.

\(^{75}\)This terminology derives from Janet Batley, 'The Literary Prose of Alfred's Reign: Translation or Transformation?' (London: King's College, 1980).

Cotton Caligula A. XV. Variants of this text occur in two other manuscripts, and we might take it for a native composition were it not for its version in MS BL Cotton Tiberius A. III, where the Anglo-Saxon text is an interlinear gloss to a Latin text. However, the piece is not a strict translation; it was re-worked and adapted into its vernacular form. For example, the first three entries in the Latin text of MS Tiberius A. III run:

Luna I. qui natus fuerit, vitalis erit. Luna secunda, mediocris erit. Luna tertia, infirmus erit.

These bear the following vernacular gloss:

[...] se þe acenned bið, liflic he bið. [...] medeme he bið. [...] untrum he bið.

In MS Caligula A. XV, these laconic notices have been expanded:

Gif mann bið akenned on anre nihta ealne monan, se bið lang lifes 7 welig. Gyf he bið on tweigra nihta akenned, se bið seoc 7 un-hal. Gyf he bið on þreora nihta, se leofað lange [...].

It is clear that this prognostic, like the recipe which we examined above, has been not merely translated but transformed. The development of 'vitalis' to 'lang lifes 7 welig' may be minor, but the adjustment from 'mediocris' to 'seoc 7 un-hal' and the reversal of 'infirmus' to 'leofað lange' are of considerable magnitude. A terse list of data in near-tabular format has been expanded into continuous prose, and the degree of this expansion is revealed by comparing the Latin text for the twelfth day of the moon with its version in MS CCC 391. What originated as 'Luna .XII., reliosus [sic] erit', attracting the gloss 'æwfaest he bið', became:

Se bið acenned on .XII. nihta ealne monan, se bið lifes 7 on allum his þingum weorp, mannum mid Gode.

These transformations demonstrate the dangers of assuming that because a text has a Latin source, it must necessarily be of reduced value for this research. Prognostic and

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77 MSS CCC 391 and Bodleian, Hatton 115.
78 Max Förster, 'Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen Volkskunde VIII', Archiv, 129 (1912), 16-49 (p. 18).
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 21.
81 Ibid.
the recipe for 'beowyrt' differ so greatly in their vernacular versions from the Latin on which they draw that it would be wiser to refer to their bases than to their sources, the existence of which in no way diminishes the value of the vernacular texts for our purposes. It would therefore seem fair to state that in general, when the vernacular text has the same references as its Latin base, they are left deliberately rather than slavishly repeated and that references to the audience in a vernacular text may be taken at their face value, rather than dismissed as remnants of their Latin source.

It should finally be noted, before returning to the botanical texts, that the common opening phrase of the computistical texts 'gif þu wille witan' is exactly paralleled by the Latin 'si vis cognoscere'. This supports our contention that the phrase is not a formula in the oral-formulaic sense, since we may now state that it is not even an Anglo-Saxon creation; further, since texts with features such as diagrams could in no case and in no language be used for oral delivery, the Latin parallels support our argument by providing us with a precise analogy in a different language.

Returning now to the botanical texts, we find that many are similar to the *Herbarium* regarding references to the audience and use of illustrations. Bald's *Leechbook*, while lacking illustrations and making extensive use of the impersonal 'mon', still allows us to deduce that a singular audience was intended from the continual use of the singular imperative:82

\[
\text{Wiþ heafod wærc genim hamwyrt niþe weardge gcnuwa lege on ceald wæter gnid swiðe oppe eall geleþred sie beþe mid þæt heafod.83}
\]

The second person singular pronoun is also used:

\[
\text{Wiþ þon gif earan dymen. genim ele do on mid eowocigre wulle and fordytte þæt eare mid þære wulle þonne þu slapan wille and do eft of þonne þu onwæcne.84}
\]

The remaining botanical texts can be treated briefly. Of the six texts described in the *Plan* as 'medical' which we have not examined,85 one uses the singular imperative (genim)86 and another is a collection of recipes, each of which is short and some of only two lines; most of these contain the singular imperative. Those few which do not, use the impersonal mon.87 A third is a collection of treatments and recipes for 'the half-

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82 MS BL Royal 12 D. XVII; *Plan* B.21.2.1; Cockayne, *Leechdoms*, II.
83 Cockayne, II, p. 18.
84 Ibid., p. 42.
85 *Plan*, pp. 205-6.
86 MS BL Cotton Galba A. XIV; Ker 157 art. IX; *Plan* B.21.2.2.
87 MSS BL Cotton Otho B. XI and BL Add. 43703 fols 261-4 (Nowell transcript); Ker 180 art 11; *Plan* B.21.2.3.
dead disease' which uses the second person singular pronoun and verb, and a fourth is a collection of recipes from the same manuscript, edited by Cockayne under the heading Lacnunga. These use the second person singular throughout. The final two texts, Plant Names and On the Formation of the Fetus, lack references to the audience and need not delay us. The Plan further lists nine 'recipes': these are of a piece with the recipes in Bald's Leechbook and also need not occupy us here, beyond noting that each of these pieces uses the singular form of the verb - usually nim or genim.

Further evidence which would indicate solitary reading may be adduced from the form of these pieces, having some two to seven lines with the standard opening of 'wiþ [name of disease]' or of eft. Those texts of a greater length, such as Bald's Leechbook, are collections of such, short, pieces. Again, it is difficult to imagine how texts of this nature could have been used for oral delivery to a group without hypothesising a use for teaching, a theory contradicted by the addresses to the audience in the singular case. The content of these texts also shows this theory to be improbable, such as the phrase 'if you have [the root] with you' in the example quoted above from Medicina de Quadrupedibus, or in passages such as that for wood thistle:

\[
\text{Wiþ } \text{þæt } \text{þu } \text{nane } \text{yfele } \text{geancymas } \text{hæe } \text{ne } \text{ondræede } \text{genim } \text{þas } \text{ylcan } \text{wyrte } \text{carduum silvaticum } \text{on } \text{ærne } \text{mergen } \text{þonne } \text{seo } \text{sunne } \text{ærest } \text{upenge } \text{and } \text{þæt } \text{sy } \text{þonne } \text{se mona } \text{sy } \text{in } \text{capricornu } \text{and } \text{heald } \text{hy } \text{mid } \text{þe } \text{swa } \text{lange } \text{swa } \text{þu } \text{hy } \text{mid } \text{þe } \text{byrst } \text{nun wiht } \text{yfeles } \text{þe } \text{ongean } \text{cyneð.}\]

This passage also demonstrates the blurred distinction between the medical and the magical, for this 'medical compendium' includes among preventions and cures for various ailments a protection against 'yfele geancymas' without any seeming incongruity. As we move in our discussion towards texts which the Plan describes as 'charms', therefore, it must be held in mind that there is no sharp line which can be drawn between these and the 'recipes' with which we have previously been concerned. In remembering this, it is perhaps unsurprising to note that these texts, too, fit our criteria for private reading in terms of their length and their references to the audience.

88 MS BL Harley 55; Ker 225 art. 1; Plan B.21.2.4.
89 MS BL Harley 585; Ker 231 art. 2; Plan B.21.3.
90 Plant Names: Plan B.21.1.2; Ker 302; MS Bodleian, Bodley 130. On the Formation of the Fetus: Plan B.21.1.2; Ker 186 art. 7b; MS BL Cotton Tiberius A. III.
92 Cockayne, I, p. 224.
The majority of the texts in this category in the Plan are mere headings to Latin charms, such as 'wip ealra feonda grimnessum', 'wip sarum eagum' and 'wip sarum earum'. It will be noticed that these headings are identical in form to the opening lines of the recipes discussed above. Leaving aside these headings we are left with a number of charms, some of which contain diagrams, such as the pieces in MS BL Cotton Vitellius E. XVIII, 'pis is Sancte Columcille circul' and 'wip þeoðfe': as we have seen, a diagram integrated in a text is a certain indicator of visual reception. Further, all those which have references to the audience address it in the singular, whether by the pronoun: 'gif hit sy ðer orf, þonne sing þu hit on IIII healfa þin, and sing ærest uprihte hit', or by the singular imperative: 'nim þonne þæt sexad, ado on wætan'. We can therefore state with confidence, based on these addresses alone, that the pieces are to be understood on the 'solitary reader' model.

The last-quoted text, 'wip faerstice', raises two points. Firstly, as may be seen from its Plan entry, 'wip faerstice' is regarded as a poetic text rather than a prose charm, despite the closing line quoted above and an opening sentence describing the manufacture of a salve. Between these lines, which Storms calls 'directions to the exorcist', is a charm - or perhaps an amalgamation of two charms - in 'loosely alliterative, irregular lines' and 'fairly regular long lines'. As a chant, it lies on the borders between poetry and prose, constituting a preliminary indication that our conclusions for prose texts may have some relevance for the poems as well, as a further demonstration of which we shall concern ourselves in the remainder of this chapter with charms which are more usually seen as poetic than as prose.

The second point which can be made from this text concerns its intended use. It will have been noticed that we described this charm as a 'chant', and a chant is by definition intended for oral delivery. Further, while the opening and closing lines directly address the reader (or in Storms's terms, the exorcist), the charm itself directly addresses the patient:

Gif þu wære on fell scoten / oððe wære on flæsc scoten
oððe wære on blod scoten / oððe wære on ban scoten,

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94 MS CCC 41; Ker 32 art. 10; Plan B.23.1.2; ed. by G. Storms, Anglo-Saxon Magic (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1948), no. 48.
95 MS ibid.; Ker 32 art. 14; Plan B.23.1.3; Storms appendix nos 4-6.
96 MS BL Cotton Vitellius E. XVIII; Ker 224 arts. 1 and m; Plan B.23.1.12.2 and 3; Storms nos 85 and 86.
97 MS CCC 41; Ker 32 art 7; Plan B.23.1.1; Storms no. 12.
98 MS BL Harley 585; Ker 231 art. 2; Plan A.43.4; Storms no. 2.
99 Storms, p. 143.
100 Storms, pp. 142-143.
In the actual usage of this charm, then, there is oral delivery (the utterance of the chant) to an audience (the patient). However, there seems no good reason to doubt that the text was approached by a solitary reader rather than by a group, since the instructions use the singular pronoun, as do many other directions and comments surrounding charms. Only the direct address to the subject seems to point against such a view, an address which is paralleled in numerous other charms; the object of a charm, however, need not be human. The charm against bees, for example, contains the passage:

Sitte ge, sigewif, siga to eor\(\textit{an}\). / Næfre ge wilde to wuda fleogan.
Beo ge swa gemindige mines godes, / swa bïð manna gehwilc metes and e\(\textit{e}\)les,

in which bees are directly addressed, while the 'æcerbot charm' addresses the earth:

Hal wes \(\textit{þu}\), folde, fira modor, / beo \(\textit{þu}\) growende on Godes fæ\(\textit{þe}\)me,
fodre gefyllde firum to nytte,

as well as four clods of earth, in a mixture of Old English and Latin:

Crescite, wexe, et multiplicamini, and gemænigfealda, et replete, and gefylle,
terram, \(\textit{þas eor\(\textit{tan}\)}\). In nomine patris [...].

Since the charms address bees and clods as well as humans, the term 'audience' can apply only in its widest and loosest sense. The fact that the audience was human in 'wip færstice' is therefore coincidental, having no bearing on the circumstances in which the charm, in its written form, was intended to be approached. Just as the recipes which we examined above describe actions to be performed when necessary at a later date, so do these charms: the difference is that here the actions are verbal as well as physical. It would therefore be unwise to place the charms in a separate category of intended reception from the recipes simply because they contain addresses to a party other than the reader. In actual use, the charms would have had an audience, be it human, animal or inanimate, but only in the sense in which the recipes imply the

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101 Storms, p. 142. It should be noted that these lines are corrupt; I have cited the emended version here, but cf. ibid. for comments.
102 Cf., among others, Storms nos. 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11A, 11B, 12 and 13.
103 MS CCC 41; Ker 32 art. 4; Plan A.43.8; Storms no.1.
104 MS BL Cotton Caligula A. VII; Ker 137; Plan A.43.1; Storms no. 8.
105 Ibid.
existence of an audience: the intended recipient of the herbal preparation. We may therefore conclude that these charms, in their written form, belong to the 'solitary reader' model of reception.

It would seem unprofitable to extend this discussion here by examining the remaining charms in detail, since all those which bear references to the audience address it in the singular; instead, we may for the sake of completeness briefly mention the Old English Lapidary before summarising our discussion to this point and turning in the next chapter to the religious prose.106

The Lapidary occupies a mere two sides of a folio in MS BL Cotton Tiberius A. III. 107 As a short note on the qualities of precious stones it resembles the mathematical notes on the size of Noah's ark or the age of the Virgin Mary, 108 and the similarity extends to its sole reference to the audience:

Sum stan is on persa rice; gif þu hine mid handa ahrinest, he birneð sona.109

This singular reference, as well as the absence of references in the plural and the similarities to other scientific texts in terms of form and content, seems sufficient for us to regard it as a text for solitary reading.

We may now summarise the discussion. In this chapter we have examined the texts which have been considered most likely to have been approached through private reading, a hypothesis which was confirmed by our analysis. All the computistical and botanical texts bearing addresses to their audiences which survive in the vernacular address their intended audience in the second person singular. The exception to this is Byrhtferth's Enchiridion, a text which reflects its author's intense concern with his readership rather than an unusual approach to the tract itself. Further, certain additional features appear at this stage to be characteristic of private reading, which we have isolated. Chief among these is the length of these pieces: they have an average length of only a few sentences. The longer texts, such as the Leechbook, the Enchiridion or De Temporibus Anni, are agglomerations of short units such as these. Secondly, we have

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106 While a lapidary by definition attributes unusual properties to stones, such as healing potentials, the editors of this text commented that 'a notable feature is the absence of any account of magical properties' (Joan Evans and Mary S. Serjeantson, eds, English Medieval Lapidaries, EETS os 190 (London: OUP, 1933), p. 13). Since it would seem inadvisable to join the debates of the definition of magical texts, our discussion of the Lapidary joins the argument more as an appendix than as a continuation of the 'magical' section. The text has been re-edited, with discussion, by Peter Kitson ('Lapidary Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England: Part I, the Background: The Old English Lapidary', ASE, 7 (1978), 9-60).


108 These mathematical notes are classed in the Plan under 'Notes and Commonplaces', B.24. Since very few of these have references to the audience it is not necessary to discuss them in full; it is sufficient for these purposes to note them as short texts, often marginalia, which are self-evidently unsuitable for oral delivery. Unsurprisingly, none addresses its audience by plural pronouns.

noted that recurring opening phrases, such as we found in the shorter computistical pieces, the recipes and the charms, are insufficient evidence for oral delivery and thirdly, that the same is true for 'homiletic colophons', such as the doxology which concludes *De Temporibus Anni* in one of its recensions. Fourthly, we have observed that in these cases at least, the texts for which Latin sources or bases have been identified are transformations rather than translations, so that features which remain in common between the Latin and the vernacular must have been left deliberately: a text is therefore not of reduced significance for this research because of its being ultimately derivative. Finally, we noted the self-evident point that visual aids such as diagrams and tables are a certain indicator of private reception by one individual at a time.

Having identified these features of solitary reception, we may now turn to the sermons which, conversely, are believed to have been intended for oral delivery, in order to determine whether these share characteristics of the texts which we have examined or whether they bear features which are indicative of the opposing model, the 'group-audience' paradigm.
Texts intended for oral delivery

Having examined a number of texts which were intended to be read by individuals, we may now turn to 'the public discourse most prevalent in Old English': the 'homily' or 'sermon'. We begin with the works of Ælfric and Wulfstan which have most commonly been designated as 'homilies', since it is to these texts that we may look in the first instance for characteristics of oral delivery and of group reception. We may then turn to the anonymous 'homilies', beginning with the Blickling and the Vercelli Homilies.

Firstly, however, we must once again address the question of nomenclature. While a large bibliography has been amassed for the 'homiletic' texts, it has for the most part been concerned with their doctrinal content, their sources and with their interrelationships. There is to my knowledge no study of their intended use, an omission largely attributable to their designation as 'homilies' or 'sermons' terms which by definition imply and necessitate oral delivery. We must therefore begin with a discussion of these terms, in order to determine whether they are appropriate for the vernacular religious prose or whether an alternative term could be found which would not imply an oral use for the texts.

The Blickling and Vercelli books have been known as collections of homilies throughout their recent history. The first known reference to the former as 'homilies' appears in the memorandum books of Humphrey Wanley for 1725, where he wrote of 'a book of Saxon Homilies in 4to', while the nineteenth-century spine of the Vercelli Book bears the legend 'homiliarum liber ignoti idiomatiss'. Precisely what Wanley and

the anonymous Italian meant by these terms, however, is unclear. In the first place,
either was able to scrutinise the manuscripts carefully - the former through lack of time
and the latter through ignorance of the language - and secondly, the term 'homily' is
itself ambiguous. Writing on sermon literature, Thomas Heffernan noted:

For the Middle Ages sermo and homilia referred to two distinct ministerial functions.
But [...] it is only recently, especially in work on Anglo-Saxon England [...] that we
can discern the distinctions between what these two words signified in the medieval
mind. Homilia is a name applied to an edifying discourse based on a text of sacred
scripture that is itself tied to a particular liturgical day or event. Sermo, on the other
hand, need not be based on a scriptural text nor need it be tied to a particular
liturgical function. In brief then, homilia is an exegetical commentary on scripture
composed for a specific liturgical celebration; sermo is an edifying discourse meant
to bring the faithful closer to Christian truth with no prescriptive theme - scriptural or
otherwise - and no obligatory connection to a liturgical event. This distinction is
observed in vernacular texts, whether in English or in Anglo-Norman, up until the
last third of the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{5}

It is thus apparent that the term 'homily' had a more precise significance than that which
it now holds; whether the meanings intended by Wanley and the annotator of the
Vercelli book lean towards the modern or the medieval understanding is clearly
disputable. Heffernan has, however, assumed oral delivery for both sermo and homilia;
scholars working on earlier periods cannot be so confident.\textsuperscript{6} Although, as Milton McG.
Gatch commented:

[...] One can be fairly certain that a majority of those who are cognizant of the
existence of an Old English homiletic corpus would, if queried, answer that the
homilies - and especially those of Ælfric - were to be read by the clergy to the people
on Sundays or Feasts in a liturgical setting, most probably at the Mass,\textsuperscript{7}

it should be remembered that 'the apparent popular assumption does not accord with the
evidence now available concerning the status of preaching elsewhere in Europe during

\textsuperscript{5} 'Sermon Literature', in \textit{Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres}, ed. by
\textsuperscript{6} In the later medieval period itself the distinctions between sermon and treatise, and between reading
and preaching (\textit{lectio} and \textit{predicatio}), are frequently unclear (H. Leith Spencer, \textit{English Preaching in the
\textsuperscript{7} Gatch, \textit{Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan} (Toronto: UTP,
the Saxon age'. Since we cannot assume oral delivery, therefore, it is necessary to find an alternative, unprejudicial term. In discussing terminology, Gatch wrote:

This confusion [over the usage of the terms 'homily' and 'sermon'] is further compounded by our tendency to categorise all religious discourses in Old English as 'homilies' and their authors as 'homilists'. We ought to distinguish between sermons (in the broadest sense) and nonsermons. What makes a religious discourse in prose a sermon [...] is that it is formally equipped to be read aloud to a congregation.

By this definition, we would be unable to describe a text as either a 'sermon' or a 'nonsermon' until it had been analysed, being forced until that time to use the cumbersome 'religious discourses in prose'. Since no shorter term is to hand, however, we shall follow Gatch, since in the application of his terminology we are at least able to reserve judgement concerning the use of a text until we have some evidence on which to base it. Whether we can follow his method of analysis, however, is a different question. He characterised the 'formal equipment', according to which he suggests a text's use may be determined, as follows:

Thus a sermon or homily will often begin and end with appropriate formulas of address (e.g., 'Dearly beloved'; 'In the Gospel which has just been read...') and closure (e.g., '...world without end. Amen') or will in some other way betray the fact that it is written to a congregation. This will be the case even though the sermons may appear in a collection put together primarily or even exclusively for private devotional reading.

It will be remembered that one of the recensions of Ælfric's De Temporibus Anni made use of a closing formula exactly akin to those of which Gatch speaks, but that the text could not have been intended for oral delivery. Further, the recipes, charms and computistical notes all made use of introductory formulas, despite being reference-texts, and provided strong indications for an opening or a closing phrase being insufficient evidence for deducing the manner in which a text was to be approached; as

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8 Ibid. This view is confirmed by Mary Clayton ('Homiliaries and Preaching in Anglo-Saxon England', *Peritia*, 4 (1985), 207-42 (pp. 241-42)), whose interest lies with homiliaries rather than with the individual texts with which we are concerned.


10 Ibid.

11 Cf. ch. 1 above.
we proceed, we shall produce further indications which run counter to Gatch's method for deducing the approach to a text. For the moment, however, we may leave the question of terminology by adopting the term 'religious discourses in prose', by which we may designate not only the 'homilies' and 'sermons' but also the saints' Lives; by adopting the terms 'sermon' and 'nonsermon' for texts which we have analysed we may also avoid making often arbitrary distinctions between the homily and the sermon, a technical issue which has little relevance for these purposes.12

We may begin with Ælfric's Catholic Homilies,13 a collection of texts about the use of which there can be little dispute. As Peter Clemoes wrote:

[...] originally Ælfric wrote the Catholic Homilies for his own use - to provide himself with the preaching material he needed as masspriest at Cerne. To quote Dr Sisam: 'we should think of the Catholic Homilies ... as, in the main, a two years' course of sermons actually preached by Ælfric, and later revised and made available for other priests'.14

The scholarly consensus is based on the incontrovertible evidence of Ælfric's own comments. As we noted in our discussion of De Temporibus Anni, which follows the Catholic Homilies in the best of our manuscripts,15 the tract is separated from the Homilies by the statement:

Her æfter fylgð an lytel cwyde be gearlicum tidum. Þæt nis to spelle geteald. Ac elles to rædenne. Þam ðe hit lícð,16

which allows us to infer that the preceding texts, the Homilies, were intended 'to spelle', or to be delivered orally. We may confirm this view from the beginning of the Homilies, which bear the title:

Incipit liber catholicorum sermonum anglicæ, in æcclesia per annum recitandorum.17

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12 In this regard, we should further note that we shall not discuss such 'homiletic paraphernalia' as pericopes or rubrics in any detail: the complexity of such a discussion would overshadow the more literary bases of our arguments.
15 MS Cambridge UL Gg. 3.28.
16 Henel, De Temporibus, p. 2.
17 Thorpe, I, p. 8.
Further, the preface to the second cycle contains the passage:

Ic gesette on twam bocum þa gerecnesse þe ic awende. for þan þe ic þohte þæt hit wære læsse æðryt to gehyrinne. gif man þa ane boc ræt on anes geares ýmbyrne. and þaðe on þam æfran geare. 

We may hence infer that the texts which this book contains should be 'sermons' in the Gatchian sense, intended for oral delivery to a listening group in church: an assertion confirmed by references to the audience and to the environment in which the texts were to be used which are scattered through the sermons. A sermon for Shrove Sunday, for example, opens:

Her is gerēd on þissum godspelle, þe we nu gehyrdon of þaes diacones muðe [...].

In a text for the first Sunday in Lent, we find:

Ic wolde eow trahtnian þis godspel, þe mann nu beforan eow rædde [...].

and numerous other examples could be cited.

There are, further, specific references to aural reception by a plural audience, such as 'mine gebroðra, ge habbað nu gehyrð [...]'

or 'ge gehyrðon lytle ær, on ðisre rædinge [...].'

Finally, Ælfric implies that he expected his aural audience to consist of laymen, whose ability to read could not be assumed:

Eow læwedom mannum mæg ðeos anfealde racu to trymminge. þeah þe ge ða digelnesse ðæræn ne cunnon.

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18 Godden, p. 2 and Thorpe, II, p. 2.
19 Plan B.1.1.11; Thorpe I, p. 152.
20 Plan B.1.1.12; Thorpe I, p. 166.
21 E.g., Plan B.1.1.14; Thorpe, I, p. 194; Plan B.1.1.15; Thorpe, I, p. 206; Plan B.1.1.19; Thorpe, I, p. 238; Plan B.1.1.28; Thorpe, I, p. 370; Plan B.1.1.38; Thorpe, I, p. 548; Plan B.1.2.24; Godden, p. 188 and Thorpe, II, p. 330; Plan B.1.2.36; Godden, p. 255 and Thorpe, II, p. 438.
22 Plan B.1.1.8; Thorpe, I, p. 114.
23 Plan B.1.1.24; Thorpe, I, p. 318. Other specific references are to be found in Plan B.1.1.22; Thorpe, I, p. 276; Plan B.1.1.27; Thorpe, I, p. 362 and Plan B.1.2.45; Godden, pp. 308–09 and Thorpe, II, p. 536.
24 As the references to a group audience of mixed laity in church demonstrate, Ælfric's (presumably literate) patrons, Ealdorman Æthelweard and his son, cannot be regarded as forming the sole audience of the texts.
Despite these clear indications of the manner in which the sermons were intended to be approached, we cannot assume that their only audience was the congregation of "lawedum mannum." The group-audience paradigm necessitates, by definition, two separate audiences: a literate audience, which was to read the text aloud or to 'deliver' the text, and a more numerous group which was merely a listening audience, which may not have been literate. Ælfric was concerned with both audiences, and traces of his concern for the readers, rather than the hearers, may be found throughout the Catholic Homilies. Thus, the first text in the collection is titled 'sermo de initio creaturae, ad populum, quando volueris': the 'quando volueris', 'whenever you (sg.) like', is addressed to the reader or 'lector' and reinforces the distinction between the solitary 'lector' and the plural auditors. The dichotomy between these two groups is formed not only by the difference of their number, but also, possibly, by their educational level: thus, Clemoes noted that '[...] the Latin preface is addressed, through Sigeric, to other learned users of the book; the English preface is meant for users of the book at large'.

We may take this argument one step further, and note not only the distinction between those who could and could not read Latin, which is manifested in the Latin titles and prefaces, but also between those who could and who could not read the vernacular: respectively, the lector and the group audience. It is to those literate only in the vernacular that the Old English preface is addressed:

Ic Ælfric munuc awende þas boc of Ledenum bocum to Engliscum gereorde, þam mannum to rædenne þe þæt Leden ne cunnon.

Other such 'notes to the reader' include an injunction not to give sermons around Good Friday, 'ne mot nan man secgan spell. on þam ðrírm swigdagum', and a note on the birth of the Virgin Mary, justifying the absence of a sermon on the topic:

[Ælfric mentions the parents of Mary] ac we nellæ be þam na swiðor awritan þy læs ðe we on ænigum gedwylde befeallon; Eac þæs dæges godspel is swiðe earfðæ læwedum mannum to understandenne. hit is eal mæst mid haligra manna naman geset. and hi habbað swiðe langsume trahtnunge. æfter ðam gastlicum andgite. þi we hit lætað unsæd.
It is difficult to imagine that such a passage could have been intended to be read out in church to a congregation: the phrase 'we nellæd be ðam ne swidor awritan' would in particular be unsuitable for such a use. Instead, we must assume that it was addressed to the reader, informing him why such a significant feast lacked a text and also, perhaps, cautioning him against providing his own lest he 'fall into any error'.

This passage also forces us to consider whether or not the Catholic Homilies were designed for interactive use: in other words, whether they were intended to be read verbatim or whether the priest was expected to use them as a basis or source for his own sermons.\(^{31}\) In support of this we may adduce the sermon 'On the nativity of one confessor',\(^{32}\) a text designed for any confessor about whom it might be necessary to speak and in which the name of the confessor is replaced with 'ille', for which the lector would ultimately substitute the appropriate name.\(^{33}\) Further, the sermon 'St. Martin' contains the passage:

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Ne mage we awritan ealle his wundra on ðisum scortan cwyde. mid cuðum gereorde. ac we wyllað secgan hu se soðfæsta gewat.\(^{34}\)
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The fact that this sentence occurs in the middle of a sermon again implies the existence of a careful and sensitive reader who would examine the text before its delivery in church, and who would remember to omit or to paraphrase the lines. This is a specific indication that some of these discourses do not appear to have been suitable for verbatim delivery. However, this conclusion does not necessitate our assuming the reverse, that the Catholic Homilies contain mere bases for sermons and comprise a preacher's manual, although the cases cited above strongly imply that Ælfric expected his readers to create their own sermons, as does the 'excusatio dictantis': 'fela fægere godspel we forlætað on ðisum gedihte. ða mæg awendan se ðe wile'.\(^{35}\) Commenting on these passages, Godden noted:

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[...] the Second Series seems to be addressed less to the congregation and more to the clergy than the First Series was [...] in his First Series Ælfric is speaking directly to the lay congregation and using the preacher only as his voice, whereas the Second Series shows the beginnings of a concern with providing a collection of
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\(^{31}\) The issue is discussed for later medieval sermons by Sabine Volk-Birke, *Chaucer and Medieval Preaching*, pp. 60-72.

\(^{32}\) Plan B.1.2.47; Godden, pp. 318-26 and Thorpe, II, pp. 548-62.

\(^{33}\) This device is also found in Ælfric's sermon 'Homily for the Common of a Confessor' (Plan B.1.5.11).

\(^{34}\) Godden, p. 295 and Thorpe, II, p. 560.

\(^{35}\) Godden, p. 297 and Thorpe, II, p. 520.
homiletic material which preachers are to select from and adapt in various ways for their own listeners, and probably to study for their own benefit too.36

It seems highly plausible that 'when he wrote the Second Series, [Ælfric] had begun to move away from his original conception of a complete course of homilies to be read in order from the pulpit, presumably verbatim.'37 However, we must not overlook the cautious tone of Godden's argument; by far the majority of its contents are complete as they stand and would be suitable for delivery without emendation. While we cannot deny that the Catholic Homilies may have been used as a manual - and the passages which we have cited imply that Ælfric expected his work also to be put to this use - it seems overall valid to hold that the Catholic Homilies were intended, in the prime instance, to be 'in ecclesia per annum recitandae'.

As we noted above, the 'group-audience' paradigm necessitates the existence of two separate audiences: one which was literate (the readers or lectors) and one which was not necessarily literate (the hearers). This double audience makes the question, could the texts also have been intended for private reading, particularly difficult to resolve, since addresses to an individual could refer to the lector as well as to the priest using the texts as a preaching manual, or as well as to those reading the texts privately for spiritual guidance and for exegetical instruction. A clue to this question is provided in an item from the second cycle:

Gif hwile gelærd man þas raec oserræde. ðæs raedan gehyre. þonne bidde ic þæt he þas scyrtinge ne tæle; Him mæg his agen andgyt secgæ fullice be þisum. and eow læwedum mannum is þis genoh. þeah þe ge ða deopan digeliness ðærne ne cunn온.38

Once again the 'læwedum mannum' are addressed directly in the second person plural, while the 'gelærd man' is referred to obliquely, in the third person singular. While this passage indicates that Ælfric also expected his work to be read privately, it chiefly demonstrates that it was primarily intended to be delivered publicly, and that it was with that audience of the unlearned that Ælfric was most concerned.39

37 Ibid., p. 215.
38 Godden, p. 267 and Thorpe, II, p. 460. The vernacular preface to the Second Series quoted above also refers obliquely rather than directly to the reader.
39 For the sake of completeness we should also mention the scribes who were to transcribe the text, whom Ælfric addresses directly (Thorpe, I, p. 8; cf. also Godden, p. 2 and Thorpe, II, p. 2). However, since scribes are a form of audience for all manuscripts, injunctions addressed to them have little relevance for our purposes.
We may now state with certainty that the *Catholic Homilies* were chiefly intended to be read aloud to a congregation in church composed of the (mainly) unlearned laity, and that they were shaped and designed to this end. Therefore, the references to the group audience which we find throughout the *Catholic Homilies* must be terms which were appropriate for a congregation of laymen. We have discussed the numerous references to the audience by the second person plural pronoun (*ge, eow*): of more interest are the phrases 'men *þ* a leofestan', in contexts such as 'men *þ* a leofostan we wylæð *eow* secgan *þ* æra apostola ðrowunge. *Þe* we nu todæg wurðið Simones and Iudan'\(^{40}\) and 'gebroðra *þ* a leofestan', in contexts such as 'mine gebroðra *þ* a leofestan', 'men gebroðra *þ* a leofestan', 'men paælæstæn', 'men paælæstæn *wyl* ðætra *þ* æra apostola ðrowunge'. We read *ne* æt godes ðenungum be =Gælan eadigan we Iob'.\(^{41}\) One might be tempted to regard these phrases - and in particular the latter - as evidence of a solely male audience. A lay congregation would, however, naturally consist of both sexes, a view which is confirmed by Ælfric's specific address to women in his sermon on the purification of Mary: 'behealde, ge wif, and understand *tí* be hire awitan is'.\(^{42}\) The terms 'men' and 'brothers', therefore, need not imply a specifically male or monastic audience, but were appropriate for a mixed lay congregation.

A more interesting form of address to the group audience is the address by the second person singular (*tí*). In our examination of the scientific and botanical texts in the previous chapter, it was suggested that the use of the second person singular in a given text strongly implied that it was intended for solitary and private reading. How, then, are we to understand the Nativity sermon from the first cycle, a text which uses the address 'gebroðra *þ* a leofestan' but which continues:

\[
\text{Scôlice me} \text{nd} \text{g} \text{os} \text{d} \text{a} \text{nd} \text{g} \text{e} \text{c} \text{i} \text{g} \text{e} \text{d} \text{e} \text{; } \text{heald for} \text{i} \text{,} \text{ð} \text{u} \text{ m} \text{a} \text{n} \text{,} \text{þ} \text{in} \text{ne} \text{ g} \text{o} \text{d} \text{s} \text{ w} \text{u} \text{r} \text{þ} \text{sc} \text{i} \text{p} \text{e} \text{;} \text{w} \text{i} \text{ð} \text{e} \text{a} \text{h} \text{t} \text{r} \text{a} \text{s} ; \text{f} \text{o} \text{r} \text{ð} \text{a} \text{n} \text{ } \text{e} \text{e} \text{d} \text{ g} \text{o} \text{d} \text{ is} \text{ } \text{g} \text{w} \text{o} \text{r} \text{d} \text{en} \text{ m} \text{a} \text{n} \text{ f} \text{o} \text{r} \text{ð} \text{e} . \text{[...]} \text{W} \text{e} \text{ m} \text{i} \text{h} \text{t} \text{on} \text{ e} \text{w} \text{e} \text{c} \text{g} \text{a} \text{n} \text{a} \text{n} \text{e} \text{ l} \text{y} \text{t} \text{l} \text{e} \text{b} \text{y} \text{s} \text{n} \text{e} ; \text{g} \text{i} \text{f} \text{ h} \text{i} \text{t} \text{ t} \text{o} \text{ w} \text{a} \text{c} \text{l} \text{i} \text{c} \text{n} \text{ n} \text{æ} \text{r} \text{e} \text{[...]}?\]
\]

This is, further, by no means the only text from the *Catholic Homilies* which uses the second person singular. Given the wealth of plural addresses, however, and the copious information provided by Ælfric himself concerning the intended use of the texts, these addresses cannot indicate solitary and private reading. Rather, since Ælfric frequently alternates between the second person singular and the plural in the space of one or two lines, we are forced to conclude that the singular address could be used

\(^{40}\) Godden, p. 280 and Thorpe, II, p. 480.  
\(^{41}\) Godden, p. 260 and Thorpe, II, p. 446.  
\(^{42}\) Thorpe, I, p. 146.  
\(^{43}\) Thorpe, I, p. 40.
when addressing a group of listeners in the rhetorical technique of 'enallage', defined by Bernard Dupriez as 'substitution of one tense, number, or person for another tense, number, or person'. Here we are concerned with enallage of number, which is the only sense in which we shall use the term henceforth; while the 'authorial we' is also a form of enallage, we shall use 'enallage' specifically to refer to the use of the second person singular in addressing a group in order to prevent the confusion which the breadth of the term is liable to engender.

Our analysis of the Catholic Homilies, then, has demonstrated that the great majority of the texts contain references to the audience in the second person plural and may be termed 'sermons' in the Gatchian sense. It must be noted, however, that there are nine texts in the First and Second Series which do not refer to their audience in the plural. For the moment, we shall class these texts as 'sermons' merely by association with the other texts in the Catholic Homilies; further and better evidence for this classification is adduced below.

There are two other methods for determining the reception of a text which should be discussed here. The first is that of Milton Gatch, who suggested that the use of formulas of opening and of closing is a characteristic of oral delivery. We have earlier doubted this claim by noting that the botanical and scientific texts, intended for private reading, contain formulas of introduction, and the sermons of Ælfric allow us further to assert that the opening of a text is of only limited assistance. While some of the Catholic Homilies have 'homiletic openings', such as:

Mine gebrōpū ða leofostan on þisum dæge we wuðiað ures hælendes acennednyssæ
[and] Men þa leofostan eow eallum is cuð. þæt ðes gearlica ymryne us gebrincð
efne nu þa clænan tid lenctenlices fæstenes,47

others do not:

Iohannes se godspellere cwæð on þære godspellican race. þæt gifta wær
gewordene on anum tune ðe is geciged CHANA, [or] Drihten cwæð on sumne timan

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47 Godden, pp. 3, 60 and Thorpe, II, pp. 4 and 98.
to his leorningcnihtum. Ne mæg nan man twam hlafordum samod ðeowian.\textsuperscript{48}

The opening of a text is therefore only of limited significance for these purposes. It seems clear, therefore, that Gatch's method is insufficiently reliable and exact to be used with confidence.

A second and more interesting method was suggested by Peter Clemoes. In discussing Ælfric's \textit{Lives of Saints}, he noted that 'a formal distinction is carefully observed between a reading-piece of this kind and a liturgical homily: in the latter there is always a reference to the anniversary \textit{today}.\textsuperscript{49} This method is clearly limited to texts which commemorate particular feasts and cannot be applied to such sermons as 'Of the Catholic Faith' or 'On the Beginning of Creation'; further, my own investigation of the religious prose has indicated that even when a text has a specific liturgical assignment, references to the feast are by no means so consistently applied as Clemoes suggested. The method can therefore be of use only when there are neither references to the audience nor other clear indications of how a text was intended to be received. Such cases are few, and we shall therefore invoke this method only in those exceptional circumstances.\textsuperscript{50}

The \textit{Catholic Homilies} therefore allow us at present to note four characteristics for texts intended to be delivered orally to a listening group. Firstly, we observe that the phrases 'men ða leofestan' and 'gebroðra ða leofestan', while implying a plural audience, need not refer to a monastic or exclusively male congregation, but could also be used for a mixed audience of laity. Secondly and thirdly, we may note that references to hearing, when they occur in the plural, strongly imply the 'group-audience' paradigm, as do direct references to the audience by the second person plural. Fourthly, we may note that direct addresses to the audience by the second person singular, when used in conjunction with addresses in the plural, must be seen as enallage rather than as indicators of the intended manner of reception. In consequence, we may refine our suggestion of the last chapter to the more precise statement: references to the audience in the second person singular are, \textit{when found exclusively in a given text}, strongly indicative of private and solitary reception.

\textsuperscript{48} Godden, pp. 29, 268 and Thorpe, II, pp. 54 and 461.


\textsuperscript{50} For example, of the nine texts in the \textit{Catholic Homilies} which we have not yet classed, there are only two which contain 'today', or some similar phrase, which lack plural references to their audience: B.1.1.5 and B.1.2.42.
Having identified characteristics of oral delivery from Ælfric's earliest collection of sermons, we may now turn to the other 'homilies' of Ælfric. The great majority of the texts in the Supplementary Collection contain direct addresses to the audience in the second person plural and can therefore be classed as 'sermons' without further discussion. For example, the text for Christmas contains the lines: '7 se sealmyrhta sang be þam Worde swa swa we her secgaþ eow to swutelunge' and 'her ge magon gehyran on þisum halgan godspelle'. Another contains the passage:

We habbaþ nu gesæd sceortlice on Englisc þis halige godspell, swa swa ge gehyrðon nu, þa nacedan word ana; ac we nu wyllaþ mid fægerum andgite hi gefrætwian eow, þæt hi licweorðe beon to lære eow eallum, giþ ge þæt gastlice andgite mid godum willan underfæð.54

Such texts are clearly sermons, and need not delay us: we may, however, note in passing that as in the Catholic Homilies, there are numerous instances of the second person singular. For example:

Ondræðe swa þu ondræðe, se deaþ þe cymþ to; ys forþ þis licor þæt þu warnige georn þæt þu yfele ne swelte, on synnum geendod, and syðdan ecelice on sawle and on lichaman æfre cwylmige on endeæsum witum, and sweltan ne mage swaþeah næfre. We willaþ secgan eow nu be þære sawle deaþe [...]56

None of these texts uses only the second person singular, however, and the adjoining presence of plural addresses allows us to view them as enallage, and the texts themselves as sermons. Only two texts in the collection lack addresses to their audience by the plural pronouns, 'De Sancta Trinitate' and 'De Doctrina Apostolica'; we shall discuss these in chapter 4 below. Of the fifteen texts which the Plan describes as 'remaining homilies of Ælfric',58 eleven contain direct references to the audience by

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51 For the early placing of these texts in the Ælfrician corpus, see Clemoes, 'Chronology', p. 219. I do not include his Lives of Saints here, which is discussed in connexion with the nonsermons in the next chapter.
53 Plan B.1.4.1; Pope, 1, pp. 200 and 204.
54 Plan B.1.4.8; Pope, 1, p. 359.
55 These are, specifically: Plan B.1.4.3 - Plan B.1.4.7; Plan B.1.4.9 - Plan B.1.4.11; Plan B.1.4.13 - Plan B.1.4.19; and Plan B.1.4.21. There seems no reason to concern ourselves with Plan B.1.4.23 - Plan B.1.4.31 which are additions to, or extracts from, other texts; Plan B.1.4.22, 'De Falsis Deis', is discussed below in conjunction with Wolfstan's version.
56 Plan B.1.4.6; Pope, 1, p. 319.
57 Plan B.1.4.12 and B.1.4.20 respectively.
58 Plan B.1.5, p. 81.
'men þa leofestan' or by the second person plural pronoun and can accordingly be termed sermons without further discussion.\(^59\) One, 'Esther', contains no references to its audience and may consequently be termed a nonsermon.\(^60\) Another, 'Friday for the Fourth Week in Lent',\(^61\) was excerpted from a piece almost five times as long;\(^62\) the original [P] was not discussed above,\(^63\) since it is clear from its opening lines that it was intended for oral delivery to a listening congregation:

On þam halgan godspelle þe ge gehyrdon nu rædan us segð be Lazare, þe seoc læg þa he wæs on Bethania-wic wuniende þa [...].\(^64\)

There are numerous direct addresses throughout P to the audience, all of which are in the second person plural with the exception of four lines [ll. 192-95] in the second person singular. In B, however, there are no addresses by the second person plural: for example, where P reads 'be þam ge magon witan þæt he is eallwealdend God', B has 'be þan we mæg witan þæt he is alwealdend God'.\(^65\) Further, the passage in the second person singular in P has been removed, passing directly from line 184 to line 196.\(^66\) Its origins as a sermon are still evident, since B makes an extensive use of the first person plural in phrases such as 'nu sceole we biddan';\(^67\) in this case it is chiefly the extreme brevity of the piece, as well as the abruptness of its ending, which enables us to deduce that it could not, in its abbreviated form, have been intended for oral delivery to a listening group.\(^68\)

The remaining text for discussion is Ælfric's 'Hexameron'.\(^69\) Although Ælfric here uses the second person singular address with a relatively high frequency, we may

\(^59\) Plan B.1.5.1, B.1.5.2 and B.1.5.4 - 12, inclusive.
\(^60\) Plan B.1.5.14; ed. by Bruno Assmann, Angelsächsische Homilien und Heiligenleben, BaP 3 (Kassel: Wigand, 1889; repr. with supplementary introduction by Clemoes, Darmstadt: WB, 1964), pp. 92-101. It uses the 'authorial we' twice on p. 92; this is not significant.
\(^62\) Plan B.1.4.6; Pope, I, pp. 311-29. Regarding the identity of the exerpter, Pope notes that it is 'difficult to decide whether Ælfric himself should be credited' (p. 308), and suggests 'an early successor [...] who was familiar [...] with Ælfric's style' (p. 309). The matter is not of direct relevance to our discussion.
\(^63\) To prevent confusion we shall refer to the excerpted text as B[elfour] and to the earlier version as P[ope].
\(^64\) B.1.4.6; Pope, I, p. 311.
\(^65\) Pope, I, p. 324 and Belfour, p. 138 respectively.
\(^66\) Compare Pope, I, pp. 320-21 with Belfour, p. 137.
\(^67\) Belfour, p. 140.
\(^68\) The function of brevity as a criterion for deducing the intention of a text was discussed in ch. 2 above; see also ch. 7 below. In this case, we are able to distinguish between the intention of the author and the intention of the exerpter, who need not have been identical; the inability to distinguish these is the chief difficulty in using the length of a text as an indicator for its intended use, since it is with authorial intent that we are chiefly concerned.
\(^69\) Plan B.1.5.13; ed. by Crawford, Exameron Anglice or The Old English Hexameron, BaP 10 (Hamburg: Grand, 1921; Darmstadt: WB, 1968).
still term the work a sermon from such phrases as 'her ge magon gehyreinne',
mycel eow mannum on mode to asmeagenne' and 'eala oère cynn ige ge ealle ne
cunnon'. These plural addresses contrast directly with his De Temporibus Anni,
which is also partly concerned with the Creation and which has only a small number of
addresses, all of which are in the singular. Further evidence for terming the
'Hexameron' a sermon is provided by its opening lines:

On sumum oûrum spelle we sædon hwilun ær hu se ælmihtiga God ealle ðing
gesceop binnon syx dagum and sefon nihtum. Ac hit is swa menigfeald and swa
mycel on andgite ðæt we ne mihton secgan swa swiðe embe ðæt swa swa we
woldon on ðæn ærran cwye. [...] We wyllað ðeah eow secgan sum ðing depticlor
be Godes weorcum on ðysum soðum gewrite ðæt ge wislicor magon witan eowerne
Scyppend mid soðum geleafan and eow sylfe oncnawan.

This passage is rich in terms describing Ælfric's works. The 'oûrum spelle' to which
he refers in the first line and the 'ærran cwye' of the fourth probably refer to the
sermon 'De Initio Creatura' which opens the Catholic Homilies; these therefore imply
that the 'Hexameron' is itself a 'spell', and thence that the words 'spell' and 'cwye'
denote texts for oral delivery. However, Ælfric then describes the 'Hexameron' as
ðysum soðum gewrite', a term which he used for the nonsermon 'Judith', which
opens '[...] we secgan nu ærest on þisum gewritum'; as Clemoes noted, 'at the
beginning [of 'Judith' Ælfric] uses the phrase on þisum gewritum' whereas his
normal word for a homily is cwye'.

It is apparent from these examples that the terms which Ælfric used to describe his
work have a wide range of meanings which are neither mutually exclusive nor distinct.
While it seems clear from the Catholic Homilies and De Temporibus that the word
'spell' indicates oral delivery, whether used verbally or as a noun, the cases of the
'Hexameron' and 'Judith' reveal that 'gewrith' does not exclusively refer to works
intended for private reading. We will return to the question of Anglo-Saxon
nomenclature in the next chapter; at present, it seems sufficient to note firstly that the
'Hexameron' was intended for oral delivery to a listening group and can therefore be

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70 Crawford, Exameron, pp. 36 and 58.
71 Ibid., pp. 38 and 54.
72 Cf. ch. 2 above.
73 Crawford, Exameron, pp. 33-34. One might also adduce its relationship to the 'Hexameron' of St.
Basil, which was definitely intended for oral delivery: this relationship is, however, both remote and
complex (see ibid., pp. 26-27).
74 Cf. ibid., p. 19.
75 Plan B.1.5.15; Assmann, p. 102. 'Judith' is discussed in ch. 4 below.
76 Assmann, p. xxviii.
77 See ch. 4 below.
termed a 'sermon' in the Gatchian sense and secondly, that it is unwise to lay stress on the terms which Ælfric used to describe his work.

In this brief examination of the works of Ælfric which are designated 'homilies' in the Plan, which was chiefly intended to discover characteristics of oral delivery by which 'sermons' could be identified, we have been able incidentally not only to refine our description of texts intended for private reading, but also to suggest that in some cases the terms 'homily' or 'sermon', with their connotations of oral delivery, have been misapplied. We may now turn to Ælfric's contemporary Wulfstan, in order to test our criteria for determining reception and to determine whether any of Wulfstan's 'homilies' should, similarly, rather be termed 'nonsermons'.

Many of the 'homilies' which have been attributed with confidence to Wulfstan make extensive use of the second person plural and of the characteristic Wulfstanian term 'leofan men', both of which indicate oral delivery to a listening group, in phrases such as:

Leofan men, understanda swyle georne þæt ge rihtlice 7 wærllice þæt healdan þæt eow maest þæref is to gehealdenne [...].

Since the intended use of these texts is clear, we may confine ourselves to the six texts which, despite having been classed as 'homilies' in the Plan and having a place in Bethurum's collection, contain neither the 'leofan men' address nor direct addresses to the audience in the second person plural. One of these, 'Isaiah on the Punishment for Sin', is a collection of passages from the books of Isaiah and of Jeremiah in Latin and in the vernacular, in which each passage has a descriptive heading: such a text could not have been delivered orally and may simply be termed a 'nonsermon'.


79 Plan B.2.1.1, Bethurum, p. 116.

80 The 'leofan men' address is found in the following texts: Plan B.2.1.1 - B.2.1.5, B. 2.2.1 - B.2.2.3, B.2.2.5, B.2.2.8, B.2.3.1 - B.2.3.3, B.2.3.5 - B.2.3.6 and B. 2.4.1 - B.2.4.3, all numbers inclusive.

81 Plan B.2.2.9; Bethurum, pp. 211-20.

82 These works may, however, imply how Wulfstan delivered his sermons: it may be that, like John Donne, he never read his sermons, but neither did he preach extempore. He prepared his sermons very carefully, made voluminous notes, and then committed the whole discourse to memory (Evelyn M. Simpson, John Donne's Sermons on the Psalms and Gospels: With a Selection of Prayers and Meditations (Berkeley: UCP, 1963), pp. 6-7. Cf. Andrew P. McD. Orchard, Crying Wolf: Oral Style and the Sermones Lupi, ASE, 21 (1992), 239-64 and William V. Harris, Ancient Literacy (Cambridge, MA: HUP, 1989), p. 223: 'In Cicero's time it appears that most of the speeches as were written out
We may next consider a group of three passages, each of which is printed by Bethurum with a companion-piece in Latin. 'Ezechiel on Negligent Priests' occurs in a vernacular form of thirty-eight lines and in a Latin form of only twenty-four, neither of which could have been used for public delivery in their existing forms: they must accordingly be termed nonsermons. Two other texts, 'Baptism' and 'A Rule for Canons', each occur in three forms: a Latin text, an Old English nonsermon and an Old English sermon. The vernacular sermons both contain the 'leofan men' address; the nonsermons are short pieces of eighty-seven and sixty lines respectively, and may be termed nonsermons by their brevity and by their absence of addresses to the audience. We are thus left with two Wulfstanian texts, both of which are related to Ælfrician works: 'On False Gods' and 'The Gifts of the Holy Spirit'.

Firstly, it should be noted that neither version of 'The Gifts of the Holy Spirit' can be termed a sermon with confidence. Neither uses the 'leofan men' address which occurs so frequently in Wulfstan's sermons, nor the 'men þa leofestan' address which Ælfric prefers, nor an address by the second person plural. While in one manuscript Wulfstan's 'Gifts' ends with the lines 'eala leofan men, utan don, swa us þearf is, beorgan us georne [...]'; this ending appears to be a later addition. Not only is it absent from the other two manuscripts in which it survives, but it is identical to the ending of 'Secundum lucam' and, since this ending may be discounted as scribal rather than authorial, we may note that neither text contains references to its audience and therefore, that both versions should be classed as nonsermons.

Wulfstan's adaptation of Ælfric's 'On False Gods' also lacks addresses to the audience, whether by 'leofan men' or by the second person plural. No Wulfstanian text of more than eighty-six lines which is classed as a sermon in the Plan is without at least one such address, and usually contains several; the absence of these features thus provides strong evidence for supposing that this text was not primarily intended for oral delivery. Indeed, these features contribute to Bethurum's description of:

had already been delivered. The purist Quintilian allows that a speaker may use notes, but holds that if a speech has been written out in full it should be memorised'.
83 Plan B.2.2.4; Bethurum, p. 239 (Latin) and pp. 240-41 (vernacular).
84 Plan B.2.2.4 and B.2.2.7; Bethurum, pp. 169-84 and 192-210 respectively.
85 Possibly these fragments were extracted from lost sermons in order to be read privately; possibly they represent passages which were to be made into sermons, either by Wulfstan himself or by another. While their original or ultimate use may thus have been oral delivery, their present form is suitable only for private reading.
86 Plan B.2.2.10 and B.2.2.6. Cf. B.1.4.22 and B.1.6.3 respectively.
87 Ælfric's version is classed as a 'tract', rather than as a 'homily', in the Plan.
88 Bethurum, p. 191.
89 Ibid.
90 Ibid., pp. 126-27. Apart from some minor differences in punctuation and orthography, they differ only in having ðæne egesan' for 'ealle unþeawas'; compare ibid., pp. 126 and 191.
[...] the impassioned style for which he is most noted. [...] The sermons show the most careful adjustment to [Wulfstan's] audience [...] above all, they are designed for public delivery. [...] His modifications of Ælfric's homily 'De falsis deis' consist very largely of the insertion of [...] phrases to clarify what has just been said.91

While Wulfstan's modifications of Ælfric's text may well have been in the interests of clarity, there seems no reason to assume that they could not have been for readers rather than listeners, particularly since the 'modifications' include a removal of all addresses to the audience. As we have seen, both Ælfric and Wulfstan were deeply concerned with the audience of their works; it is thus somewhat unusual for Ælfric to have made so little reference to it in this text, and even more unusual that Wulfstan should not have attempted to supply this want, had the text been intended for oral delivery. It is, therefore, most plausible to suppose that 'On False Gods' is a nonsermon in its Wulfstanian revision.

Ælfric's text, however, addresses its audience twice by the second person plural. It opens with 'eala ge gehyred' later in the text is sufficient for us to deduce a prime intention for oral delivery,95 although the paucity of addresses is relatively uncommon. We may therefore regard the Ælfrician 'On False Gods' as a sermon, despite its having far fewer addresses to the audience than is normal for Ælfric, which was adapted into a nonsermon by Wulfstan; and with this suggestion briefly to turn to their 'pastoral letters', which contrast strongly with 'On False Gods' and 'The Sevenfold Gifts of the Holy Spirit' in terms of their addresses to the audience.

Ælfric's three pastoral letters, the Letter to Wulfsige and the two Old English Letters for Wulfstan, were clearly intended for oral delivery to a listening group, as the following extracts show:

91 Ibid., pp. 89-90. Among the several discussions of Wulfstan's style, see in particular Stephanie Hollis, 'The Thematic Structure of the Sermo Lupi', ASE, 6 (1977), 175-96 and Orchard, 'Crying Wolf'.
94 Pope, II, p. 713.
95 Ibid., p. 704.
We beodað eow mæssepreostum, þæt ge beodon eallum þam folce, þe eow to-locas and ge oferscriftas synt, þæt mann freolsige þa feower forman easter-dagas sæces þeow-woerces [...],96

Us bispocum dafena, þæt we ða bolican lare þe ure canon us tæcð ant eac þe oð Cristes boc, eow preostum openian on englisce spece; forþan-ðe ge ealle ne cunnan þæt læden under-standan [...].97

[and] Eala ge mæsse-preostas, mine gebroðra! We secgað eow nu þæt we ær ne sædon.98

Similarly Wulfstan’s ‘pastoral letter’,99 which addresses its audience in the second person plural throughout, is prefaced ‘sermo item incipit praedicatio’ in one of its manuscripts:100 only one of its five versions contains the opening ‘Wulfstan arcebisceop greteð freondlice þegnas [...]’, from which its original epistolary form may be surmised.101 These pastoral letters, which contrast greatly with the last two Wulfstarian texts which we discussed above, were clearly intended for oral delivery and, since these need not delay us, we shall now turn to the anonymous ‘homilies’.

We may begin with the religious prose of the Blickling book.102 Of the eighteen texts which survive, all except one contain the address ‘men þa leofestan’: these pieces may be termed ‘sermons’ without further discussion. We may therefore confine ourselves to two texts: Blickling IV, for which we may examine the use of Latin sources by homilists, and Blickling XVIII, the one nonsermon in the collection.

Blickling IV, as Rudolph Willard has shown, makes extensive use of Caesarius of Arles’s sermon De reddendis decimis.103 As Willard wrote, however, ‘the Old English translator handled his materials freely, usually giving meaning for meaning [...] rather

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96 Letter to Wulfsige (Plan B.1.8.1), ed. by Bernhard Fehr, Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics in Altenlischer und Lateinischer Fassung, BaP 9 (Hamburg: Grand, 1914; repr. with supplement to the introduction by Clemoes, Darmstadt: WB, 1966), p. 32.
97 First Old English Letter for Wulfstan, (Plan B.1.8.2), Fehr, p. 69.
98 Second Old English Letter for Wulfstan, (Plan B.1.6.3), Fehr, p. 147.
99 Plan B.2.3.1; Bethurum, pp. 225-32.
101 Ibid.
than word for word and has a markedly different tone, as Marcia Dalbey has demonstrated. For our purposes, the main interest of the Caesarian text lies in its alterations of the original references to the audience.

Firstly, while each text twice addresses its audience as 'brothers', these addresses are not translations of each other and do not occur in the same places; the 'ratres carissimi' with which De reddenis decimis opens became 'men ἡ a leofestan' in the Old English. This shows not only that the translator was prepared to alter the addresses for his own purposes but also that the address to the audience as 'brothers', while possibly inspired by the Latin text, must have been permissible in the vernacular context. The fact that the term 'brothers' occurs at all, when it could have been replaced by 'men', allows us to deduce that it must have sounded natural to its Anglo-Saxon audience: thus, we may again affirm that such phrases as 'forþon, þroþor mine ἡ a leofestan, syllæþ ge eowere toþan sceattas þyder' must have been suitable for the Anglo-Saxon laity, especially since a monastic congregation would have no obligation to pay tithes.

Secondly, we may note that Caesarius makes much greater a use of the second person singular than does the Blickling author. The majority of these singular addresses occur in uncomplimentary phrases such as 'ingrate fraudator ac perfide' and 'redime te, homo, dum vivis'; while these may well have influenced the phrase 'þu dysega mon' in the Blickling text, the reduction in the Blickling version also enables us to infer that continual addresses in the second person singular would have sounded strange in the vernacular. The adaptation of the addresses not only softens the tone of De reddenis, therefore, but also transforms the result from a strict translation to a work which is in harmony with the vernacular homiletic style.

*Blickling* IV has thus confirmed our interpretation of the 'brothers' address and provided another opportunity for us to examine the Latin base of a text in conjunction with its vernacular version. This showed that here, as in the scientific texts, the translation into the vernacular is effectively a transformation, so that it would seem unnecessary to discount the features which remain in common between 'Third Sunday in Lent' and De reddenis decimis; so much has been altered that what has been left cannot be there through mere deference to the original.

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106 Morin, p. 143 and Morris, p. 39.
107 Morris, p. 43.
108 It is clear from the context that the sermon demands tithes in the financial rather than the metaphorical sense.
109 Morin, p. 145 and Morris, p. 41.
As we noted above, seventeen Old English texts in the Blickling book address their audience by the phrase 'men ða leofestan': unlike the sermons of Ælfric and of Wulfstan which we examined above, these texts prefer the occasional use of this lengthy address to repeated direct addresses by the pronoun. Indeed only Blickling IV makes extensive use of the pronominal address, which is the only piece to require a specific and quantifiable result from its audience: financial contribution. Further, only in this sermon is the implied speaker exhorting his congregation to perform an action from which he is himself exempt;111 the other Blickling sermons encourage actions which are as necessary for the speaker as for his audience, such as repentance or sincerity of faith, and thus instead use the first person plural. The intention of this tithing sermon, therefore, provides an excellent explanation for its extensive use of direct and personal addresses to the audience.112

Although direct addresses and exhortations are less common in the Blickling texts than in the sermons of Ælfric and of Wulfstan which we examined above, it is apparent that each addresses its audience at least once. Only one text in the Blickling book, 'St. Andrew',113 lacks the address 'men ða leofestan'; significantly, it also lacks any reference to its audience, whether in the singular or in the plural, and opens with 'her segð þæt' rather than with an address indicating hearing or a plural audience.114 This total absence of features which are shared by all the other texts in the Anglo-Saxon portions of the Blickling book, including the first person plural, forces us to suppose that Blickling XVIII is not a sermon. The fact that it is the final text in the collection raises the possibility that the nonsermon,115 intended for private or for group reading, was added simply in order to fill the manuscript, a phenomenon which also occurs in MSS Bodleian Junius 85-86 and in the Vercelli book, as we shall see below.116

The eighteen Old English texts of the Blickling book, therefore, comprise seventeen sermons and one nonsermon. Since these present no further difficulties, we may turn to the Vercelli book, 'the earliest extant collection of homiletic texts in English'.117 Among the twenty-three prose texts, eighteen use the address 'men ða

111 Assuming that the lector was in holy orders, which seems probable; cf. the introduction above.
112 I have counted no fewer than twenty-nine uses of the second person plural, a large number when compared to the three of Blickling VIII and to the single occurrences in Blickling V and XV.
113 Plan B.3.1; Ker 382 art.18; Morris XIX.
114 Morris, p. 229.
115 It is also the final text in MS CCCC 198, the only other location of the text.
116 This phenomenon is also noted by Antonette di Paolo Healey (The Old English Vision of St. Paul, Speculum Anniversary Monographs 2 (Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1978), p. 14); however, the principle of expedience, which we are forced to invoke at present, cannot be the full explanation.
leofestan' and may in consequence be termed 'sermons'; of these, three also use the address 'brothers' and four the second person plural. In addition to these Vercelli III, which lacks the 'beloved men' phrase, uses 'brothers' eight times as well as containing direct addresses in the second person plural; we may accordingly term it a sermon. Since it would seem redundant to examine these in further detail, we may concentrate on four texts: the three remaining texts which contain no addresses and Vercelli VII which, while making extensive use of the direct address in the second person plural, is worthy of separate attention by virtue of its extensive use of the second person singular and its direct addresses to women. It is on these four texts that we may focus our attention, then, since the remainder presents no difficulties.

The classification of the text which ends the Vercelli book, Vercelli XXIII, also presents few problems. As Celia Sisam wrote, 'it is drawn from chapters IV and V of an Old English translation of Felix's Vita S. Guthlac', and no attempt has been made to tailor it for oral delivery; Francis Clough wrote that 'in places, this paraphrase seems almost like a slavish translation, especially in the opening line', 120 'was þær in þam foresprecenan iglānde sum mycel hlæw of eorþan geworht [...].' 121 Such an opening is inconceivable in a text for a group audience; the term 'sprecenan', which Jane Roberts has described as an 'otiose retention', 122 follows not a description of East Anglia but Cynewulf's Elene. Further, the text contains no addresses to its audience, even by such phrase as 'gehyran nu': in a codex which uses the phrase 'men þa leofestan' nearly ninety times, by my reckoning, it would have required little ingenuity to prefix the address to the text. We must once again assume that the scribe, finding remaining space, gave little or no thought to the potential readers: 123 in the view of Scragg, 'it is probable that whoever assembled the collection had [...] no overall design for his book'. 124

The three remaining prose texts of the codex are the Christmas sermons, Vercelli V and VI, and Vercelli VII. The last of these merits individual discussion since, while it contains numerous addresses to its audience in the second person plural, there is also an unusually high frequency of addresses in the second person singular. Further, it makes no addresses by 'men þa leofestan' or 'brothers', an absence paralleled in only

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118 This calculation is confirmed by Scragg, ibid., p. 127; however, he regards the 'brothers' address as a variant of 'men þa leofestan'.
119 C. Sisam, Vercelli, p. 17.
121 Scragg, Vercelli, p. 383.
123 The 'lone worker' who copied the Vercelli book is discussed in C. Sisam, Vercelli, p. 44 and in Scragg, Vercelli, pp. lxxi-1xxiv.
124 Scragg, ibid., p. xx. The abrupt termination of Vercelli XXIII also supports this hypothesis.
three other pieces in the codex. More unusual even than this, however, are its specific and direct addresses to women:

   Ne sprece ic þæs word to eow werum anum ac to wifum. Eawla, wif, to hwan wenest þu þines lichoman hæle geican mid smyringe 7 of þæwle 7 odrum liðnessum?125

Rather than assuming that the speaker's use of 'eow' in this context implies either an exclusively male audience or a 'double house of men and women',126 we may look more closely at the piece. Its theme is the avoidance of gluttony and, by extension, of all other physical indulgence. Having described the hardships faced by Lazarus and by such Old Testament figures as Noah, Abraham and Isaac, the narrator continues:

   Gehyræc eac hwæt Crist cwæð, þæt þa þe mid hnescum hægelum gegyrede wæron, on cyninga husum wæron. On heofenum þæt ðonne is þa þe for Godes lufan swylce habban nellað.127

This prepares him for his reference to women as the chief target of Christ's injunction:

   For hwon wene ge þæt wif swa sioce syn of hyra gecynde? Ac hit is swa: of hira liðan life hie bið swa tyddre[...].128

Having referred to women in the third person, addressing himself to men, the speaker then turns to women with the lines with which we opened this discussion, moving from women as rhetorical examples to women as members of the audience. It is thus his usage of women as an abstract which forces him into direct address; a feature paralleled in Ælfric's sermon on the purification of the Virgin Mary, to which we alluded above. Having introduced the case of Anna, a woman who had been married for seven years and widowed for eighty-four, Ælfric continued:

   Rihlice swa halig wif wæs þæs wyrðe þæt heo moste witigian embe Crist, ðæða heo swa lange on clænnesse Gode þeowode. Behealde, ge wif, and understandða hu be

125 Ibid., p. 136. Scragg follows Celia Sisam (Vercelli, p. 44 n. 2) and Forster (Die Vercelli-Homilien, p. 144 n. 36), in describing this passage as 'corrupt': the MS reads 'eowrum' and 'hæle'. Neither substitution affects our discussion.
126 Elizabeth Robertson, Early English Devotional Prose and the Female Audience (Knoxville: UTnP, 1990), p. 168. Celia Sisam suggests that the Vercelli book may be the product of a nunnery, but follows Forster in stating that Vercelli VII 'must have been intended [...] for a mixed lay audience' (Vercelli, p. 44).
127 Scragg, Vercelli, p. 135.
128 Ibid., pp. 135-36.
A woman is used as a type in both the Vercelli text and Ælfric's sermon. In the latter Anna is adduced as an example of chastity, after which women are directly addressed: so in *Vercelli VII*, when women are held up as an example of vulnerability to sloth, they are directly addressed in the following passage. There is thus no reason to assume that this text was intended for an audience different in approach or in composition from that of the other sermons in the Vercelli book;¹³⁰ and this explanation also accounts for the extensive use of the second person singular. The *tu*-address is confined to passages which refer to women as a type and which address women (or more precisely, Woman) directly. Thus, its use is connected more with the segregation of the audience for effect than with a difference in reception; having spoken of one section of the audience as if it were not present the speaker then must, in order to include his whole congregation, address directly the group which he had ignored previously.

While *Vercelli VII* is clearly a sermon, then, it is clear that in terms of the features with which we are particularly concerned, it is of a different style from the other Vercelli sermons.¹³¹ However, the remaining prose texts from the Vercelli codex, *Vercelli V* and *VI*, contain no references to the audience, whether by an opening address or by the second person pronoun, using instead the first person plural throughout.¹³² Both are assigned to Christmas Day and would be unsuitable for delivery at any other time in the year, even within the Christmas season:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pa hie pa to Bethlem comon, wæron pa ða dagas gefylld ðet hio bearn cennan scelede. 7 pa cende hio sunu, hire frumbearn, on ðas niht ðe nu toniht wæs. } & \text{[V]} \quad 133 \\

the sagað ymb ðas mæran gewyrð ðe to ðyssum dæge gewearð, ðætte ælmihtig dryhten sylfa ðas world gesohte [...]. & \text{[VII]} \quad 134
\end{align*}
\]

The fact that the codex contains two texts for the same feast is unusual enough to raise the question, is there a more than coincidental relationship between the works or, since

¹²⁹ Thorpe, 1, p. 146.
¹³⁰ The technique of addressing fragments of the audience is also found in the works of Chaucer: in the *Legend of Hyppisyle* and in *Troilus and Criseyde* he addresses the lovers in his audience (ll. 1554-56 for the former and Book II, ll. 29f, 43-44 and 1751-53 for the latter), while in the *Legend of Phyllis* he writes 'Be war, ye wemen [...]’ (ll. 2559f). This is discussed in Crosby, 'Chaucer and the Custom of Oral Delivery', *Speculum*, 13 (1938), 413-32 (p. 419) and see also our introduction above.
¹³¹ The difference of style is itself explained by Scragg's comment that 'the item has many of the hallmarks of a literal translation from Latin but no source has yet been found' (*Vercelli*, p. 133).
¹³² This contrasts with the 'nonsermons', *Vercelli XXIII*, *Blickling XVIII*, Wulfstan's 'On False Gods' and his 'The Sevenfold Gifts of the Holy Spirit', none of which uses the inclusive first person plural.
¹³³ Scragg, *Vercelli*, p. 112.
¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 128.
Vercelli VI survives uniquely in the Vercelli book, could it have been composed specifically to complement Vercelli V? In support of the latter suggestion, we may note the division of material between the two: while Vercelli V is concerned with the events prior to the birth of Christ, Vercelli VI focusses on later incidents, such as the flight into Egypt. Such a division appears to be deliberate rather than coincidental; however, this is a subject which is peripheral to our main concerns, and which requires more space than can here be permitted for its proper consideration. For these purposes it is sufficient to note that, regardless of any closer relationship between the Nativity texts, they have a common lack of addresses to the audience: it would seem, therefore, that there must be a further feature for oral delivery which we have not specifically adduced and which must now be described: the inclusive first person plural.

We have noted above that texts such as 'Esther', Vercelli XXIII and the 'St. Andrew' piece from the Blickling book not only lacked addresses to the audience in the second person plural but also used the first person plural only in its authorial sense. Further, in our discussion of Blickling IV we noted that the second person plural is used most frequently when the implied speaker exhorts his audience to perform actions from which he is exempt, such as the paying of tithes; this is, however, one of the few exceptions to the rule that the standard of behaviour towards which Christians are exhorted should apply at least as forcefully to the clergy as to the laity. Thus, when the implied speaker is urging his audience to perform actions to which he himself is also enjoined, he uses the 'we which puts him on the same level with his congregation' rather than the 'distancing ge'. It is logical, therefore, that the first person plural can form as appropriate an address as the second person plural and that its use, when inclusive rather than authorial, constitutes an address to the audience.

If we now extend our criteria for oral delivery to the inclusive first person plural then we have no difficulty in regarding the Vercelli pieces as 'sermons', since they use the form extensively: for example, Vercelli VI closes with 'utan we eorne tilian, þæt we þe selran syn, þonne we þyllec a bysena usses Dryhtnes beforan us recsan 7 rædan ge gehyras', while Vercelli V contains such phrases as 'nu we gehyrdon on ðyssum godspelles segenum [...]'. Further, eight of the nine texts in the Catholic Homilies which lack direct plural addresses contain the hidden address of the first person plural, in phrases such as þreo halige mægnum we gehyras be ðisum wife on ðissere rædinge', or more commonly as a variant of 'uton we biddan [...]'. These texts

136 Scragg, Vercelli, p. 131.
137 Ibid., p. 113.
138 plan B.1.2.9; Godden, p. 69 and Thorpe, II, p. 114.
139 Eg. Thorpe, I, pp. 434 and 500; Godden, p. 297 and Thorpe, II, p. 518.
may now be termed sermons.\textsuperscript{140} In addition, there are several instances of the inclusive first person plural in Ælfric's 'On False Gods', for which we noted an unusual paucity of addresses by the second person plural; this shortage of addresses is greatly ameliorated by its use of the 'inclusive we'. As we have seen, the vast majority of texts which were intended for oral delivery address their audience by the second person plural or by a specific phrase; it is only in a small minority of cases, such as \textit{Vercelli V} and \textit{VI} and a very few Ælfrician texts, that this rule is inapplicable. The inclusive first person plural, however, will be of greater importance to us later in our discussion.

Having examined the two major collections of anonymous 'homilies', it seems unnecessary to discuss the various texts which have been so classed in the \textit{Plan} and which occur in various and miscellaneous manuscripts. The great majority of anonymous 'homilies' contain the 'men \textit{pa} leofesan' phrase, often with references to the audience in the second person plural and with references to aural reception, such as 'nu ge gehyras\textsuperscript{5}'; in the light of our findings from the Blickling and Vercelli texts we may class such texts as 'sermons' without further discussion. Many of the religious prose texts, however, are fragmentary, being extracts from longer pieces or isolated paragraphs with unknown sources, and we may deduce little from these.\textsuperscript{141} As in the case of the three Wulfstan texts 'Baptism', 'A Rule for Canons' and 'Ezechiel on Negligent Priests', we can only speculate whether the fragments are extracts from longer sermons, now lost, or whether they are bases for sermons which were later to be composed and which do not survive: what is certain is that such short passages could not have been used for meaningful oral delivery to a congregation, regardless of whether they contain addresses to their audience in the plural or references to aural reception. More needful of discussion are the works categorised as 'homilies' in the \textit{Plan} which address their audience exclusively by the second person singular; these will be considered after our analysis of the religious prose which was not intended for oral delivery, since we must firstly have some understanding of the nature of nonsermons before examining this group.

In conclusion, therefore, we may summarise the characteristics which we have discerned from the Old English sermons. Firstly, we have noted that the addresses 'leofan men', 'men \textit{pa} leofesan' and 'gebro\textit{r}a \textit{pa} leofesan' can be used to address a congregation of laity of both sexes, and need not imply a male or a monastic audience. Secondly, we have observed that while sermons can use second person singular pronouns, this usage is rhetorical rather than literal. Thirdly, we have commented that with a very few exceptions, texts which were intended for oral delivery repeatedly refer

\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Plan} nos. B.1.1.21, B.1.1.30, B.1.1.31, B.1.1.33, B.1.1.35; B.1.2.9, B.1.2.42 and B.1.2.46. The only text in the \textit{Catholic Homilies} to lack any addresses is B.1.1.5; this, 'The Assumption of St. John', may be termed a 'sermon' by Clemoes's criteria, as we saw above.

\textsuperscript{141} See among others B.3.4.23, B.3.4.28 and B.3.4.33.
to their audiences in the plural. Fourthly, we have seen that the first person plural can function as a hidden address to the audience and that its presence is sufficient grounds for us to determine an intention for oral delivery. Fifthly, we have remarked that the procedure suggested by Gatch is useful only for determining whether or not a text is complete rather than for indicating oral delivery and have noted the suggestion of Clemoes for deducing the use of a religious prose text on the basis of its referring to the liturgical feast in question, which we have once needed to apply. In order fully to test these criteria for determining oral delivery, therefore, we may now turn to the saints’ Lives and to other religious nonsermons in the next chapter.
Saints' Lives and Other Religious Prose

In this chapter we examine the remaining religious discourses in prose and identify their differences from the sermons. Having firstly examined Ælfric's Lives of Saints and noted its differences from the Catholic Homilies we continue our discussion of the Ælfrician corpus with his letters, observing that like the term 'homily', this designation has been applied loosely to a miscellaneous body of texts. In order to facilitate our understanding of the vernacular letter, we examine the writs to which they are most closely akin: similarly, in discussing technical religious texts such as monastic Rules, we turn to the law-codes for comparison. Finally, we examine a number of texts which, while having been classed as 'homilies' in the Plan, repeatedly address their audiences by the second person singular.

Having now shown that many religious vernacular prose texts may be termed 'sermons', we may turn to the remaining works in this corpus. Firstly, however, we must return to the question of terminology, since Gatch's nomenclature now becomes a hindrance; it is no longer sufficient to define a text as a 'nonsermon' by virtue of its contrasts with the 'sermons', since the use of the term 'nonsermon' for texts as disparate as Ælfric's Heptateuch and the 'St. Andrew' piece of the Blickling book can lead only to confusion and to imprecision. As we stated above, it is one of our aims to find more accurate descriptions for texts than the traditional and amorphous terms 'sermon', 'homily' and 'saint's Life', and this intention will not be furthered by applying a simplistic dichotomy. Rather, having now identified the categories of 'texts for private reading' and 'sermons', which represent the extreme limits of the receptional spectrum, we may define an intermediate category: the 'reading text'. This term describes those texts which lack addresses to their audience, whether by the 'men þa leofestan' phrase, the second person plural, the second person singular or by the inclusive first person plural. For the moment we cannot determine the intended use of these texts,1 since while our premise that a text bearing addresses to its audience by the plural was primarily intended for oral delivery, while a text bearing consistent

1 The resolution of this question is the subject of ch. 5. Before attempting this, it is necessary firstly to delineate the corpus of this category, which is the chief concern of this chapter. In our discussion we shall frequently cite the following editions of legal materials: W. de G. Birch, Cartularium Saxonica, 3 vols (London: Whiting, 1885-99; New York, NY: Johnson, 1964); F. E. Harmer, Anglo-Saxon Writs (Manchester: MUP, 1952); F. Liebermann, Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen 3 vols (Halle: Niemeyer, 1908-16); P. H. Sawyer, Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 8 (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1968) and A. J. Robertson, Anglo-Saxon Charters (Cambridge: CUP, 1939).
addresses to its audience by the singular was primarily intended for private reading, seems unquestionable, its reverse is invalid: it cannot be assumed that the absence of such addresses necessitates a particular mode of reception. The important distinction between the forms is that the sermon and the private text invite, if not demand, a plural and an individual audience, whereas the reading text makes no such invitation. At the moment, therefore, it must be sufficient for us to note that the reading text, for which we cannot predict either the number of the audience or the style of reception, is of a wholly distinct form from the sermon and from the scientific text and that as such, it constitutes a separate receptional category from those which we have examined above.

As a final clarification of our definitions we shall cite three works concerned with the Cross which may be categorised as sermons and as reading texts: the class of texts intended for private reading was sufficiently defined in the second chapter above. The sermon, 'Discovery of the True Cross', indicates by its opening words that it was intended for oral delivery to a group:

Geherað ge nu hwæt ic eow secgan wille ymbe þa halgan rode þe crist on þrowode. 
hu heo on þeosne dæg gefunden wæs,

a classification supported by the phrase 'swa we ær beforan eow ræddon' later in the text. As we have remarked, such direct addresses to the audience by the second person plural indicate that the text was primarily intended for aural reception by a group, and we may consequently term 'Discovery of the True Cross' a sermon without further discussion. This contrasts with 'The Holy Rood-Tree', a text of approximately twice the length of 'Discovery' which, with the exception of one occurrence of the first person plural in the third line, has no addresses to the audience whatsoever: the single occurrence of the first person plural, in the phrase 'we iherden sæcgen þurh sumne wisne mon [...]', is clearly the 'authorial we' and cannot be taken as an address. 'The Holy Rood-Tree' is thus a 'reading text', lacking any indications for the manner in which it was to be approached. We cannot suggest whether it was intended for private reading or for public delivery; our very inability to answer this question demonstrates that the text is of a different kind from the sermon.

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2 Plan B.3.3.6; ed. by Morris, Legends of the Holy Rood, EETS os 46 (London: OUP, 1871), pp. 3-17.
3 Ibid., p. 3.
4 Ibid., p. 17.
5 Plan B.3.3.5; ed. by Napier, History of the Holy Rood-Tree, EETS os 103 (London: OUP, 1894).
6 Ibid., p. 2.
The third text is 'Exaltation of the Holy Cross', an Ælfrician work which occurs in his Lives of Saints. Unlike Ælfric's sermons, which we discussed in the previous chapter, and unlike the 'Discovery of the True Cross' which we discussed above, there are no addresses to the audience in the second person: unlike 'Holy Rood-Tree', however, and unlike the Blickling and Vercelli nonsermons, Ælfric makes an extensive use of the inclusive first person plural. These pronouns are effectively addresses to the audience which include the speaker, in phrases such as 'we wútiæ mid lof-sangum for ures geleafan trymminge'. It is therefore apparent that 'Exaltation of the Holy Cross' is a sermon, despite lacking the direct addresses in the plural which would most strongly indicate an intention for oral delivery.

Having now clarified three categories of reception and the terms by which they may be designated, we may turn to the collection from which the last example was taken: Ælfric's Lives of Saints, which in the view of Walter Skeat 'may practically be regarded as forming a 'third series' of Ælfric's Homilies'. Ælfric states in his Latin preface to the Lives of Saints that he expects the contents to be read as well as heard: 'siue legendo, seu audiendo'. This is paralleled in his prefaces to the Catholic Homilies, as we saw in the previous chapter, and in comparing the two one is immediately struck by their similarity: the chief difference which one is led to expect between the collections is of content, rather than of form. There is thus no reason to suspect from the prefaces that the Lives of Saints should contain nonsermons rather than sermons, an impression which is confirmed by the opening of the first piece:

Men ða leofestan hwilon ær we sædon eow hu ure hælend crist on þisum dæge on soðre menniscynsse acenned wæs [...].

There are numerous other addresses to the audience by the second person plural throughout the text, and we may consequently term the work a 'sermon' without further discussion. The following piece, however, is a 'reading text', since it contains no direct addresses to the audience and opens 'mæg gehyran se ðe wyle be þam halgan mædene eugenian [...]. It is apparent, therefore, that the Lives of Saints

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8 Skeat, II, p. 144.
9 Skeat, I, p. 5. Cf. also Ælfric's vernacular preface to the Lives, ibid., p. 5.
11 Plan B.1.3.2; Skeat, I, pp. 10-24.
12 Ibid., p. 10.
13 Plan B.1.3.3; Skeat, I, pp. 24-50.
are a very much more miscellaneous collection of texts than the Catholic Homilies, so that we cannot assume that because a text is found in the collection it must have been intended for a use similar to its companions', as we could in our examination of the First Series of Catholic Homilies.

We may firstly mark the sermons in the collection, among which 'Ash Wednesday' is the most prominent. Such a text is a strange inclusion in the Lives of Saints, being not only unconnected to the life or passion of a saint but indisputably designed for oral delivery, as the following passage shows:

> We sædon nu þis spel. forðan þe her bið læs manna on wodnes dæg. ðonne nu to dæg beð, and eow gebyræ þæt ge beon gescrifene. on þissere wucan. ðæne huru on ðære ðære.

There are also numerous references to the audience in the second person plural throughout the text, as well as a few in the second person singular which may be regarded as enallage. The text is prefaced with 'þis spel gebyræ sefoð seon niht ær lenctene'; this is clearly for the benefit of the lector, who was to read the text to the congregation. As we saw in our discussion of Ælfric's sermons in the previous chapter, such prefaces also indicate that the text was intended for oral delivery to a listening group.

To 'Ash Wednesday' we may add several other texts which address their audience by the second person plural. The Chair of St. Peter contains the phrase:

> Nu wylle we eow secgan. sume petres wundra. him to wyrmynyte. and eow to trymmínge,

as well as the phrases 'nu wylle we eac eow secgan' and 'we wyllað eow secgan. sceortlice þas getacnunge'; we may therefore term the text a sermon. Similarly, 'The Forty Soldiers' opens:

> We wyllað eow gereccan þæra feowertiga cempena ðrowunge. þæt eower geleafa þe trumre sy. þonne ge gehyræð hu þegenlice hi þrowodon for criste.

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15 Plan B.1.3.13; Skeat, I, pp. 260-82.
18 Plan B.1.3.11; Skeat, I, pp. 218-38.
19 Skeat, I, p. 220.
20 Skeat, I, pp. 220 and 226 respectively.
21 Plan B.1.3.12; Skeat, I, pp. 238-60.
and later contains the phrase 'swa swa ge gehyrdon on ðissere rædinge', while 'On Auguries' contains such addresses as 'ge dwæs-menn' and 'wite ge to wissan', as well as such passages as:

\[\text{Þonne gesiðþ se deofol ðæt ge hine forseð. and him bið} \text{Þonne wa on his awyrigedum mode. ðæt ge swa anræde beð. and nimð andan to eow. and wile eow geswencan mid sumere untrum-nysse. oðde sum eowre orf ardlice acwellan [...].}\]

These and several other texts in the Lives of Saints contain addresses in the second person plural and enable us to deduce a prime intention for oral delivery: yet having now shown that some of the texts are sermons, we must turn to 'St. Martin', which is unquestionably a nonsermon.

Firstly, we may note the length of 'St. Martin', which runs to 1,495 lines in print. While there is no average length of an Old English sermon, we have found nothing remotely comparable with so extensive a work as this. Secondly, it bears no references to its audience: the very occasional use of the first person plural is intelligible only as the 'authorial we'. Thirdly, we may note that the text is divided into fifty-five numbered sections, which range in length from some three to some eighty-eight lines of print: it will be remembered that the only other text which we have encountered with numbered sections was De Temporibus Anni, which was intended for private reading. Fourthly, it contains a clear suggestion that the text was intended for solitary reception in the phrase 'be þam mæg under-gitan se þe þas boc ðæt'. Clearly, therefore, 'St. Martin' cannot be regarded as a text intended for oral delivery.

Besides 'St. Martin', there are many other texts in this collection which bear no addresses to the audience by the second person plural pronoun, nor by a phrase such as 'men þa leofestan', and which use the first person plural only in an authorial sense, such as 'Passion of St. Denis and his Companions' and 'St. Oswald'. Such texts cannot be assumed to have been intended solely, or even chiefly, for private reading; however, it is equally apparent that they were not intended primarily for public delivery. We may therefore designate these works with confidence as reading texts.

24 Plan B.1.3.18; Skeat, I, pp. 364-82.
25 Skeat, I, pp. 370 and 376 respectively.
27 Plan B.1.3.30; Skeat, II, pp. 218-312.
29 Skeat, II, p. 274.
30 Plan B.1.3.29; Skeat, II, pp. 168-90 and Plan B.1.3.26; Skeat, II, pp. 124-42, respectively.
If our division of the contents of *Lives of Saints* into 'sermon', 'reading text' and 'text intended for private reading' is valid, then we may make two further points on that basis. Firstly, we may comment on *The Maccabees*, which is divided into numbered sections in two of its recensions, but not in the others. If we were to describe it as a work intended for private reading merely on the basis of its numbering, we should be forced to place the numbered recensions in a different receptional category from the unnumbered texts, which would clearly be fallacious. For a text to be classed in a given category, however, it is not sufficient for it merely to bear indications of a certain style of reception: it must also lack any hallmarks of other kinds of reception, and *The Maccabees* contains the following passage:

Ac Crist on his tocyme us cydde ðëres ðincg. and het us healdan sibbe. and soðfæstynsse æfre. and we sceolon winnan wið þa wælhlreowan fynd. þæt synd ða ungesewenlican. and þa swicolan deofla þe willeð ofslean ure sawla mid leahtrum.

This passage provides a good example of the third usage of the first person plural: the general, or all-encompassing sense. Clearly, the words of Christ were not addressed specifically to the speaker, so the *we* cannot be authorial; equally clearly, Christ was not addressing solely the implied speaker and his congregation, so the *we* cannot be inclusive. Rather, the first person plural is here functioning in a manner similar to the indefinite third person *mon* rather than as a direct address. This usage of the first person plural occurs quite frequently, especially in indirect speech from biblical or patristic sources: it is usually easily distinguishable from the inclusive and authorial uses and, since it does not constitute an address to its audience, has no significance for these purposes. Therefore, we may regard the passage quoted above as having no addresses to its audience and hence, *The Maccabees* as a text entirely lacking in addresses. This alone suffices for us to describe it as a text which was not primarily intended for oral delivery, so that its division into numbered sections in some of its recensions becomes additional, rather than crucial, evidence for determining its mode of reception.

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31 *Plan* B.1.3.25; Skeat, II, pp. 66-124.
32 Skeat, II, p. 112.
33 Other examples of the 'general' use would be 'our Lord', 'our language' or 'our nation', as we noted for *Emberdays* in ch. 2 above: such phrases clearly refer to the audience, but also to many more people besides.
34 It should be noted that here and henceforth the term 'biblical' includes those texts which were later termed 'deutero-canonical' or 'apocryphal': cf. Forster, 'A New Version of the Apocalypse of Thomas in Old English', *Anglia*, 73 (1955-56), 6-36 and Marie M. Walsh, 'St. Andrew in Anglo-Saxon England: The Evolution of an Apocryphal Hero', *An Med*, 20 (1981), 97-122.
The problem of the juxtaposition of texts such as 'St. Martin' and 'Ash Wednesday' leads us to a wider question: what validity, or what unity, does the Lives of Saints have as a collection? Clemoes noted that while 'most items [are] narrative pieces intended not for reading as part of the liturgy, but for pious reading at any time, [...] there are also some homilies'.35 Later, Clemoes described the Lives of Saints as a 'non-liturgical reading-book',36 the contents of which 'were written over a period of time; [...] there is very little to suggest an order of priority between them'.37 His interpretation of the Lives of Saints presents us with two options.

Firstly, we could disregard Clemoes and suggest that the texts were intended for verbatim oral delivery, in the manner of the First Series of the Catholic Homilies. While this accounts for such texts as 'Ash Wednesday' or the opening Nativity piece, it is impossible to believe in the case of 'St. Martin'. However, this at least has the merit of allowing us to take the liturgical designations for the texts literally, such as 'idus Ianuarii' or 'XII. kalendas Februarias'.38 Alternatively, we could follow Clemoes' interpretation of these prefaces as being 'for ease of reference' in the 'non-liturgical reading-book'.39 However, the passage in 'Ash Wednesday' quoted above, 'we sædon nu þis spel. forðan þe her bǐð læs manna on wodnes dæg. þonne nu to dæg beð', would certainly not have been written if the text had been intended, at the time of its composition, to be read privately by individuals: such an interpretation would be nonsensical.

We must therefore surmise that Lives of Saints was compiled, as Clemoes suggested, from pre-existing material as well as from specially written works, and that the prime motivating factor for a text's inclusion was not the manner of its intended use at point of composition. Further, we may deduce that the texts were not methodically revised prior to their inclusion in the collection, since such a revision would certainly have deleted the passage in 'Ash Wednesday'. Therefore, we must hold either that the compiler had forgotten the passage, and that the presence of 'Ash Wednesday' in the collection is both accidental and erroneous, or that he was aware of the passage and of the numerous plural addresses in the sermons, but did not consider these a bar to their inclusion. It is clearly the latter of these two options which is the more plausible, and we thus have a striking indication that sermons were considered suitable for private reading, even though such was clearly not the use intended at the time of their composition.40

35 Clemoes, Chronology, p. 220.
36 Ibid., p. 221.
37 Ibid., p. 222.
38 Skeat, I, p. 90 and p. 116 respectively.
39 Clemoes, Chronology, pp. 220-221.
40 Spencer notes that 'the proposed purpose of a medieval text was not necessarily respected' (English Preaching, p. 42).
We may therefore regard *Lives of Saints* as a miscellaneous collection, the contents of which were intended at the time of compilation, rather than at the time of composition, to be used as reading texts rather than as sermons. As further support for this conclusion, we may adduce its non-Ælfrician contents: 'The Seven Sleepers', 'St. Mary of Egypt', 'St. Eustace' and 'St. Euphrosyne'. None of these four texts has any references to its audience whatsoever: their few uses of the first person plural pronoun outside direct speech are exclusively authorial, and we may therefore term these items 'reading texts'. The fact that all the non-Ælfrician works are obvious reading texts may provide some further evidence for the criteria according to which the compilation was made: it is possible that Ælfric's authorship was sufficient justification for the inclusion of such texts as 'Ash Wednesday', despite their design for oral delivery, but that when selecting items which were not written by Ælfric, the form of the texts was of greater importance. If this be so - and while it must remain speculative, it seems highly plausible - then we have further grounds for stating that the distinction between the sermon and the reading text is not anachronistic, but was perceived by the Anglo-Saxons themselves.

Besides this quartet from the *Lives of Saints* there are numerous anonymous works, many of which are concerned with the lives and passions of saints, which may be termed 'reading texts': these include 'St. Margaret', 'Vitas Patrum' and 'Vindicta Salvatoris', as well as such pieces as 'St. Christopher', 'James the Greater' and 'Boniface to Eadburga'. The last of these is misleadingly classed as a 'letter' in the *Plan*; however, while the Latin piece on which it is based was certainly a letter, opening with 'rogabas me, soror carissima' and closing with 'haec autem te diligenter flagiante scripsi', it was subsequently both translated into Old English and transformed into a reading text. The story of a vision of the Otherworld was extracted and the references to the audience and indications that it was originally a letter deleted: the tale is instead presented as reported speech, punctuated with 'he cwæd þæt' and 'he sæde þæt'. Such a text cannot reasonably be described as a 'letter' in the usual sense of the term, and in the absence of any references to its audience we must instead describe it as a reading text.

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41 *Plan* B.3.3.7, B.3.3.8, B.3.3.23 and B.3.3.34 respectively; all ed. in Skæt I and II.
42 B.3.3.14, B.3.3.35 and B.8.5.4; Assmann, pp. 170-80, 195-207 and pp. 181-92 respectively.
46 Sisam, *Studies*, p. 212 and p. 224 respectively.
47 Ibid, at e.g. p. 213.
While the 'Letter to Wulfgeat' conforms far more closely to the style of a 'letter' than does 'Boniface to Eadburga', the 'letter' of Ælfric to Sigewead with which it is classed in the Plan does not. While the last is preaced with ðis gewrit wæs to anum men gedihht ac hit maeg swa ðæah manegum fremian', and the 'Letter to Wulfgeat' with 'nis ðis gewrit be anum men awnten, ac is be eallum', and while each is connected with the Old English Heptateuch and uses a mixture of addresses, they are very different pieces. The 'Letter to Wulfgeat' initially addresses Wulfgeat personally and directly by the second person singular but changes into the plural pronoun for the closing lines:

Getidige us se ælmihtiga god, þæt we magon eow secgan his halgan lære oft, and eow gehyrsumnyssé, þæt ge ða lære awendon to weorcum eow to þearfe, se þe leofðæ and rixðæ a to worulde. Amen.

The ending of this 'letter' once again demonstrates the inadequacies of Gatch's method for determining whether or not a text was intended for oral delivery to a group. The opening of the text demonstrates that it was intended for private reading:

Ic Ælfric abodd on ðisum Engliscum gewrite freondlice grete mid godes gretinge Wulfgeat æt Ylmandune! Be þam þe wit nu her spræcon be þam Engliscum gewritum, ðæ ic þe alænde [...].

Further, the comparatively rare dual pronoun is used again later in the piece:

Nu to ðæg þu beswicst sumne ðærne mann, and to merigen beswiðsum ðærne man þæ: þonne synd gyt begen beswicene for gode. Ac inc ðam were betere, gif gyt woldon, þæt incer ægðer fylste ðærum to rihte, þæt gyt begen weron butan swicdome and eowre æhta hæfdon and eac eowre sawla.

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48 Plan B.1.8.6 and B.1.8.4 respectively.
50 Letter to Wulfgeat (Plan B.1.8.6); Assmann, pp. 1-12 (p. 1).
51 The Heptateuch itself, as a strict biblical translation, cannot be subjected to this kind of examination since we cannot speak of authorial intent with any validity; however, we can suggest that the category of 'reading-text' is the most applicable.
52 Assmann, p. 12.
53 Ibid., p. 1.
54 Ibid., p. 7 (my emphasis). The changing of the dual to the plural is neither unusual nor significant for these purposes: cf. Ælfric's translation of Genesis: 'Ic and þæt cild gað unc to gebiddenne, and we sædan cumæð soma eft to eow' (Crawford, Heptateuch, p. 141).
Apart from its ending the text bears no indication of having been intended for the attention of anyone other than Wulfgeat himself; further, the closing lines may rather confirm this than otherwise. Two 'letters' are known from the 'Rule of Chrodegang',\(^{55}\) which occur in both their original Latin and in vernacular translation. One is headed \textit{his ærendgewrit sende sum Cristes þegen to mæssepreostum \textit{7} to oðres hades preostum to heora lifes rihtinge};\(^{56}\) the other, \textit{his is to þam biscope}.\(^{57}\) The former, as a 'pastoral letter', addresses its audience in the plural throughout and need not concern us further; the latter, however, uses the second person singular for all except the closing lines:

\begin{quote}
Se ælmihtiga God gedo þe þeon \textit{7} ealle þine leofan preostas an ælcon gode, \textit{7} geunne þæt ge moton becuman to þære eadignysse eces wulres, þær he rixæ \\
geond worolda worold. Amen.\(^{58}\)
\end{quote}

The ending of the piece once again supports Gatch's thesis that doxologies are markers of conclusion; the fact that the piece was originally intended for one specific recipient and thus for solitary reception,\(^{59}\) however, reinforces our contention that such endings can be taken only as indicators of closing and not of oral delivery. The ending also sheds further light on \textit{Ælfric's 'Letter to Wulfgeat'}, which used the plural only in the final lines, perhaps indicating a custom of closing a letter with a more general greeting to the families or companions of the addressee.\(^{60}\) If this can be accepted, then we have no reason to regard the 'Letter to Wulfgeat' as having been intended for oral delivery and may view it as a 'letter' in the full sense of the term: a text intended for private reception. While the preface to the text indicates that more than one recipient was ultimately envisaged, there is no reason to suppose that the preface was written at the same time as the letter, nor that a change in the size of the audience should have been paralleled by a change in style of approach.

The 'Letter to Sigeweard' has far less cause to be so termed, since it functions as a preface to the Heptateuch, summarising and explaining its contents. However, parts of


\(^{56}\) Napier, \textit{Chrodegang}, p. 87, section LXXVIII.

\(^{57}\) Ibid., p. 92, section LXXX.

\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 94, section LXXX.

\(^{59}\) It is of course possible that the bishop could have had the letter read aloud to him; however, such would be more a delegation of private reading than our conception of oral delivery or of group reception.

\(^{60}\) Further support for this is adduced by Harmer, \textit{Writs}, pp. 70-73, where numerous valedictions from writings, all of which use the plural, are cited and discussed. Plural valedictions are absent from the 'Fonthill Letter', however, and from the 'Letter of Bishop Denewulf', in both its Latin and vernacular versions.
the text are aimed specifically at Sigewead, such as the penultimate lines, which admonish Sigewead for having pressed Ælfric to drink, and the opening: 'Ælfric abbod gret freondlice Sigwerd æt Eastheolon. Ic secge þe to sōðan þæt se bið swiþe wis, se þe mid weorcum spricð [...]'.

Unlike the 'Letter to Wulfgeat', the piece varies regularly in its address from the second person singular, which is used in a personal and precise sense and strongly indicates that Ælfric was then addressing Sigewead himself, to the second person plural, which is used in more open and general terms. Further, the 'letter' has a number of 'false endings', such as '[...] mid þam leofan Hælende se þe a rixað on ecynsse. Amen',

and '[...] þæt God si gehroð, se þe a rixað. Amen'.

Since each of these 'false endings' is followed by an abrupt change of subject, it is evident that these Gatchian phrases are true markers of closing rather than mere pious apostrophes; and these phrases, as well as the alternations in address, contribute to the impression that the text was written not continuously but over a period of time, during which Ælfric's conception of his text varied considerably. Parts of the text resemble the 'Letter to Wulfgeat' in terms of their addresses, others seem to be a preface to the Heptateuch and others parts of a work separable from its immediate context. This interpretation both explains and permits the text's lack of unity and cohesion in terms of its subject, its addresses and of its style: these factors alone indicate its unsuitability as a sermon, and when in addition to these we adduce its length we are drawn to the clear conclusion that the 'Letter to Sigewead' was not, as a whole, intended for oral delivery.

The same is true for another surviving and nonfragmentary vernacular text which can, if authentic, reasonably be described as a 'letter' in the normal sense of the term: 'Eadwine of New Minster'. This letter begins:

Ic Eadwine munuk cilda mæstere an Niwan mynstre grete þe wel Ælfsige bishops. Ic

61 Crawford, _Heptateuch_, p. 15.
62 Ibid., p. 68 (l. 1153).
63 Ibid., p. 72 (l. 1226).
64 Ibid., p. 74 (l. 1261).
65 This description resembles our earlier discussion of Ælfric's 'Hexameron', which we described as a sermon. However, they differ considerably: the 'Hexameron' has a far higher incidence of addresses to the audience and of those, a higher proportion is in the plural than in the 'Letter to Sigewead'. Further, the 'Letter to Sigewead' is far longer than the 'Hexameron', and more disjointed.
66 Plan B.6.2; ed. and trans. by Harmer, pp. 401-03. The absence of any closing valediction, such as one might expect from the Latin letters and vernacular writs of the period, seems to imply that something is missing at the end: while this analogy may be false, see Harmer, pp. 70-73, on 'valedictions' in writs.
67 Harmer notes that 'the authenticity of [the letter] seems more than doubtful' (ibid., p. 387), and calls it 'spurious' (p. 1). The text's entry in the Plan renders it worthy of discussion here; in any case, the relevant criterion for us is the manner of its addresses, which is congruous with the use in authentic Anglo-Saxon letters and vernacular writs and is therefore, in some sense, authentic.
kype (he) laford þæt nu for þreon gearan ic læg innan minan portice anbuton nontid [...] 68

Since the purpose of the letter is to describe his visit to a shrine, Eadwine has little reason repeatedly to address Ælfísige: however, it is significant for us that when he does, he uses 'hlaford' or 'þu'. Thus, we may regard this text as having been intended for private reading rather than for oral delivery to a listening group, enabling us better to understand 'De Sanguine', 69 a fragmentary text which in its surviving form, at least, could not have been intended for oral delivery. However, we may now infer that even when complete, 'De Sanguine' must have been intended for private reception. The difference between it and 'Eadwine of New Minster' is that where the latter is merely descriptive, the former is injunctive and admonitory:

Ic scegce eac ðe, broðor Eadweard, nu þu me þyse þæde, þæt ge doð unrihtlice, þæt ge þa engliscan þeawas forlætæ þe eowre fæderas heoldon and hæðenra manna þeawas lufið þe eow þæs lifes ne-unnan and mid þam geswutelæ þæt ge forscœð eower cynn [...] 70

It will be noted that the writer of the piece, who is presumed to have been Ælfric, 71 changes his address in the first line from the second person singular to the second person plural. However, since the second part of the fragment, which is concerned with propriety, is directly addressed to Eadweard, the change in the form of the address is explained by the context: it is not only Eadweard but the group with which he is in contact and which he represents whom the author castigates, 72 and thus the second person plural is used. 73 There is then no difficulty in regarding 'De Sanguine' as a text intended for private reception and thus, further evidence is adduced for so classing the 'Letter to Sigeweard'.

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68 Harmer, p. 401.
70 Ibid., p. 62.
71 The text follows a note on blood-letting in a 'mainly Ælfrician collection' in MS Bodleian, Hatton 116 (Catalogue, p. 403), is listed as an Ælfrician work in the Plan and is attributed to Ælfric by Wilhelm G. Busse, 'Boceras. Written and Oral Traditions in the Late Tenth Century', ScriptOralia, 5 (1988), 27-37 (p. 33). Kluge, however, makes no claim for Ælfric's authorship of the piece ('Fragment', p. 62), and Whitelock describes the writer as 'anonymous' (EHD, I, p. 825).
72 It would be simpler to refer to 'Eadweard's monastery'; as we have seen above, however, the term 'brother' was applied loosely in Anglo-Saxon England and its usage cannot be taken as indicating holy orders. We may infer that the author of the letters was himself in orders, if we should wish to avoid deducing literal kniship; we cannot make this assumption about the recipient.
73 In her partial translation of this text, Whitelock noted that 'the change of number here shows that the author means the English people in general' (EHD, I, p. 825). The same is true for Alfred's Preface to the Pastoral Care, which addresses Waerferth by the second person singular until 1. 56, where he parenthetically addresses all his bishops by the second person plural: such cases of 'reverse enallage' are not literal addresses.
The remaining 'letter' to be discussed is the 'Letter to Sigefyrth'. From the thirteenth line of this text to its ending over two hundred lines later, there are no addresses to the audience; the first person plural is not used inclusively. Parts of this section of the text were later 'adapted [...] as a homily [and] after that, in turn this homiletic adaptation was drawn on for De Virginitate'. We need cite only its opening:

Ælfric abbod gret Sigeferð freondlice! Me is gesæd, þæt þu sædest be me, þæt ic ðær tæhte on Engliscum gewritum, ðær eower ancor æt ham mid eow tæhð, forþan þe he swutelice sægð, þæt hit sy alyfed, þæt mæssepreostas wel moton wifian, and mine gewritu wīcweðs þysum. Nu sege ic þe, leof man, þæt me is lað to telenne agenne godes freond, gyf he godes riht driftæ, ac we sceelon secgan and forswigian ne durræ þa halgan lære, þæ se hælend tæhte: Seo lære læg eaðe unc emliche seman.

Again, we find the address changing to the second person plural when people beyond the named recipient are concerned; the presence of the singular, however, as well as of the dual unc, enables us to state with confidence that this section of the work is addressed specifically to Sigefyrth and was not intended for oral delivery; to this section a reading text is appended, which is fully comprehensible without the prefatory lines. It is clear, therefore, that the 'Letter to Sigefyrth' proper is merely the initial section, which is followed by what is effectively a separate piece; it is also clear that neither was designed for oral delivery to a listening group.

Although structurally identical to the 'Letter to Sigefyrth', the Plan classes 'Judith' as a 'homily of Ælfric'. Its classification as a 'homily' doubtless rests on the opening lines of the piece: 'leofan men, we scegað nu ærest on þysum gewritum [...]'. However, Clemoes noted:

The opening words of Assmann's text, 'leofan men', occurring only in Otho, clearly do not originate with Ælfric, for it is a form of address at the beginning of a homily

74 Plan B.1.8.5; Assmann, pp. 13-23. The Plan lists another 'letter', 'Scribbles', B.6.3 and B.27.3.21; this is a mere three-line note on the verso of the last leaf of a manuscript, which is both fragmentary and 'partly illegible' (Catalogue, pp. 319-20). Curiously, the Fonthill letter, S1445, is classed as a 'miscellaneous text' in the Plan: B.15.5.7. This text has attracted much attention by historians: see in particular Keynes, 'The Fonthill Letter', in Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss on the Occasion of his Sixty- Fifth Birthday, ed. by M. Korhammer (Cambridge: Brewer, 1992), pp. 53-97, giving full text, translation and commentary and Mechthild Gretsch's forthcoming article in ASE, 23 (1994). We need note only that its author, Ordlaf, addresses King Edward the Elder in the second person singular; the same is true for the 'Letter of Bishop Denewulf', Plan B.15.5.6 (S.1444), ed. Birch, II, no. 619, p. 282.

75 Assmann, 'introduction', p. xviii.

76 Plan B.1.8.6; Assmann, p. 13.

77 Plan B.1.5.15; Assmann, pp. 102-16.

78 Assmann, p. 102.
which he never uses.\textsuperscript{79}

If we can discount the opening then the text is entirely free of addresses to its audience until its apparent ending 'pam sy a wur\textsuperscript{80}mynt to worulde! Amen', in line 423. Like the 'Letter to Sigefyrth', then, the great bulk of the piece may be termed a 'reading text' with no difficulty; also like the 'Letter to Sigefyrth', 'Judith' contains a separate section, this time at the end of the piece, which addresses its audience both by singular and by plural second person pronouns. Here, it is 'min swustor' who is specifically addressed by the singular and her fellow convent-members who are adduced by the plural: 'nim\textsuperscript{81} eow bysne be \textlt{\textsuperscript{82}}yssere ludith, hu clænlice heo leofode ær Cristes acenndnyss[e [...]]'. As Clemoes wrote, 'from ll. 429-42 it appears that Ælfric wrote this piece for a nun [...] it seems clear that Ælfric himself did not think of this piece as a homily'. Rather, as our comparison shows, the text is of the same form as the 'Letter to Sigefyrth', and neither may be termed a 'sermon' with validity.

It is thus apparent that the term 'letter' is something of a misnomer for both these texts, for if the 'Letter to Sigefyrth' or 'Judith' can be termed a 'letter' then so, logically, should the Lives of Saints: the only difference is of scale.\textsuperscript{83} Both consist of texts which were not intended for oral delivery, sent to an individual at his specific request who is directly addressed and named at the beginning of each work. It seems that the term 'letter', like the terms 'homily' and 'saint's Life' in their traditional applications, is too amorphous and imprecise to be used with confidence or with consistency. For the sake of clarity, the 'pastoral letters' should be regarded as sermons, the 'Letter to Sigefyrth', the 'Letter to Sigeweard', the 'Letter to Wulfgeat', the 'Fonthill Letter', the 'Letter of Bishop Denewulf', 'Eadwine of New Minster', the 'De Sanguine' fragment and 'Judith' as reading texts for specific addressees\textsuperscript{84} and 'Boniface to Eadburga' as a reading text. Since, of all these, only the 'Letter to Wulfgeat', the 'Fonthill Letter', the 'Letter of Bishop Denewulf', the doubtful 'Eadwine of New Minster' and, perhaps, the 'De Sanguine' fragment in its original, lost form correspond to the usual conception of a letter, this term is unhelpful for our understanding of Anglo-Saxon vernacular texts.

\textsuperscript{79} Assmann, 'introduction', p. xxviii.
\textsuperscript{80} Assmann, p. 115. There is an occasional use of the 'authorial we'; this is not significant for our purposes.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} Assmann, 'introduction', p. xxviii.
\textsuperscript{83} See Harmer, p. 23, where she discusses 'epistolary prefaces'; her comments are also quoted here below.
\textsuperscript{84} One might describe the Preface to the Pastoral Care and the letters to Wulfgeat and to Sigefyrth as 'open letters'; since we are not directly concerned with the evolution of literary conceits, however, such a term would be of little benefit.
Given that the term 'letter' has been applied to so wide a range of texts, it is particularly difficult to understand Pope's comment on 'De Sancta Trinitate':

[...] I find it probable that four different compositions of Ælfric are here combined: parts of the Letter to Wulfgeat, the Sermo in Octavis Pentecosten, the Interrogationes, and three passages, possibly consecutive in their original form, from another composition otherwise unknown [which might be] part of a similar letter [to the Letter to Wulfgeat], otherwise lost, from Ælfric to an interested layman.85

While the 'three passages [...] fit together surprisingly well',86 there seems little reason to assume that their postulated source must have been a letter. None refers to its audience, using the first person plural only in its authorial or most general senses, and thus contains no evidence for the form of text from which it may have been extracted. The term 'letter' is applied with most validity to texts which name their recipient, address him by the second person singular or, in the cases of the 'letters' to Wulfgeat and to Sigefyrth, use the dual pronoun; none of these features is present in 'De Sancta Trinitate', and it therefore seems optimistic so to term its postulated source.

Regarding 'De Sancta Trinitate' itself, there are few grounds on which to regard it as having been intended for oral delivery. All direct references to the audience and to the feast of Pentecost which the original texts contained have been removed: while the elimination of the liturgical referent may be understood as necessary for the new concerns for which the piece was to be adapted,87 the removal of the direct addresses strongly implies that a new function was also intended. While several addresses by the inclusive first person plural remain, these could only have been expunged wholly by drastically revising the piece, which the compiler was clearly not prepared to undertake.88 We may leave this text, therefore, with the comment that it is either a very poor sermon or, more probably, a poor 'nonsermon'.

Another Ælfrician text which has been likened to a 'letter' is 'De Doctrina Apostolica',89 although regarding this piece, which is a composition of two Ælfrician extracts which 'were not composed at the same time',90 Pope suggested:

85 Pope, I, pp. 458 and 456.
86 Ibid., p. 456.
87 It acts as an introduction to an enlarged copy of Ælfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies in one manuscript cf. Pope, I, p. 453. It alone has no liturgical assignation in MS BL Cotton Vitellius C. V. MS; Pope (ibid., p. 455) speaks of 'crude transitions', 'clumsy echoes' and 'awkward anticipations'.
88 By Clemoes ('Chronology' p. 225 and p. 222, footnote 4); Braekman suggested that 'the non-rhythmic part [...] served a non-homiletic purpose' ('Ælfric's Old English Homily "De Doctrina Apostolica": An Edition', Studia Germanica Gandensia, 5 (1963), 141-73 (p. 147)).
89 Pope, II, p. 614.
It may be so [that the two passages, in common and in rhythmical prose, were originally letters], but I am unable to point to anything distinctively epistolary about them, and both passages seem to me appropriate for a congregation.91

However, the direct address to the audience in the second person singular is, if not 'distinctively epistolary' then at least distinctively non-homiletic:

Ærest man fet þæt cild mid meolce, and syðan mid hlæfe. Gif þu hit fetst ærest mid hlæfe, hit ne leofæð sona.92

We have frequently noted that the second person singular is used in sermons for rhetorical purposes: however, it is never found in such texts alone, but always in close proximity to plural addresses. There are no such addresses in the non-rhythmical first part of the text, which uses only the 'authorial we'. Further, the passage containing the singular address derives from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, where the plural is used: 'lac vobis potum dedi, non escam; ... adhuc enim carnales estis'.93 It is unlikely that Ælfric would have changed the plural to the singular if he had been addressing a congregation, and we must therefore regard at least the first section of 'De Doctrina Apostolica' as having been a text intended for private reading and, possibly, for a specific recipient.

There seems little need to discuss the second, rhythmical part, which has no references to its audience and which provides no additional evidence.94 Rather, we may simply suggest that the text appears to be complete and usable for private reading, rather than for oral delivery, as it stands in its two full copies,95 and that the single address to the audience implies that the first part of the work, at least, was intended for that purpose.96 In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, therefore, we may term

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91 Ibid. However, my understanding of Clemoe's comments is that only the former, non-rhythmical passage may be an extract from a letter; this does not significantly affect the argument either way.
92 Pope, II, p. 622.
93 Ibid.
94 No scholar has, to my knowledge, explained why 'De Doctrina' is composed of two parts which are so different stylistically: on the topic of composite texts, however, see Godden, 'Old English Composite Homilies for Winchester', ASE, 4 (1975), 57-65. It is at least certain that in terms of content, the two parts fit far more harmoniously than do the segments of 'De Sancta Trinitate'. Braekman notes an 'abrupt' transition of topic ('Ælfric's Old English Homily', p. 149), but this occurs some ten lines before the beginning of the second, rhythmical section; it may be that the closing lines of the first section were composed specifically to lead in to the second part of the work, further implying that the compiler was Ælfric himself. If this be so, then it is here if anywhere that we might expect some indications that the text was intended for public delivery; however, there are none.
95 'De Doctrina Apostolica' occurs in full in MSS Bodleian Hatton 115 and CCC 303, and as excerpts in MSS CCC 419 and BL Cotton Faustina A. IX; cf. Pope, II, p. 622.
96 While one manuscript has an expanded ending to the text which addresses its audience by the inclusive first person plural, this may be a later addition to the text. Otherwise, all instances of the first person plural are either authorial or general (II. 205-07), having no significance for our purposes.
'De Doctrina' a nonsermon, and conclude our examination of the letters by turning briefly to the texts with which they are most closely connected: the Old English writs.

F. E. Harmer defined a writ as:

[...] A letter on administrative business to which a seal was appended, and the protocol (or opening clauses) of which named the sender of the letter and the person or persons to whom it was addressed, and contained a greeting. [...] Diplomatically the Anglo-Saxon royal writ is a development of the letter, and it is possible to be too definite in relegating the king's writ to a special category.97

While this definition implies that the chief difference between a 'writ' and a 'letter' is its function and content rather than, necessarily, its form, Harmer continued: 'it must be emphasised that the Anglo-Saxon writ is not to be regarded primarily as a literary product; it is a business document or administrative instrument'.98 The writ is, however, a document intended for a specific audience which it addresses directly and is in this regard closely akin to many of the texts which we have examined above. Indeed, while the writ should not be regarded primarily as a literary product, Harmer herself notes this as a secondary characteristic, drawing comparisons with the introductions to Ælfric's Lives of Saints and to the prose Genesis, which she describes as 'epistolary prefaces'.99 Their main interest for Harmer is their use of the notification protocol which is so common in writs, for 'with few exceptions [...] there is a notification in the form 'ic cyðe eow' (or æ or inc)',100 phrases which are also used in the 'letters'. There is also at least one charter which contains a direct address; while some address the promulgator's 'successors',101 and others 'posterity',102 one contains the lines:

Ic Ælfric cyðe minan leofan hlaforðe þæt ic on Æþelsige minan suna þæs landes þe ic to þe gearmode æfter minan dæge to habbanne his dæg [...].103

It is thus further apparent that there is some confusion surrounding the use of the term 'letter' for Anglo-Saxon vernacular texts, which can on its widest definition describe the preface to the Lives of Saints. There seems no need further to digress from our topic by closely examining the writs and charters: it is sufficient for us merely to note that Harmer's research confirms the doubts which we have cast on the use of the term

97 Harmer, p. 1.
98 Ibid., p. 10.
99 Ibid., p. 23.
100 Ibid., p. 63.
101 Plan B.15.3.8; S1289; Robertson no. 21.
102 Plan B.15.3.3; S1280; Robertson no. 19.
103 Plan B.15.3.12; S1303; Robertson no. 35.
'letter'. For the moment, no better term can be suggested for such pieces than 'reading text', the ambiguity of which at least lacks the fault of being actively misleading; and with this observation we may continue our examination of the religious prose with the 'technical' religious prose, such as the *Rules and Penitentials* to which we have alluded above.

Much of the technical religious literature corresponds in form and in style to the scientific texts which we discussed in chapter 2 above; there is therefore no need to examine such pieces as 'Equivalence of Masses and Fasts' in any detail. Neither need we examine such texts as prayers, creeds and other liturgical items, the use of which is self-evident. For example, a typical vernacular confessional prayer opens:

Myn drihten god ælmihtig. ic þe eom andetta minra synna þara þe ic in minre gemeleste wîp þe geworhte [...].

The strong emphasis in this prayer upon the individual and his sins implies that the implied speaker was undertaking private devotions and that the prayer was not to be recited by a group: however, such texts need not be discussed here. Indeed, much of the technical religious literature conforms to our description in chapter 2 of the private text, and can therefore be treated rapidly: for example, the *Old English Martyrology* not only occurs in the form of short, headed chapters but also bears no references to its audience. Its few uses of the first person plural are general rather than inclusive, such as the following:

On þone twelftan dæg þæs monþes bið sancte Gregories geleornes ures fæder, se us fullwiht onsaende on þas Brytene. he is ure altor, ond we syndan his alumni: þæt is þæt he is ure festerfæder on Criste, ond we syndon his festerbearn on fullwihte.

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104 *Plan* B.11.8; Cockayne, III, p. 166.
105 Eg. *Plan* B.11.9 and B. 12.
106 *Plan* B.11.9.3; ed. by H. Logeman, 'Anglo-Saxonica Minora', *Anglia*, 12 (1889), 497-518 (pp. 501-03).
107 They are discussed in ch. 6 below.
108 There is a large bibliography for the historical significance of such works, early examples of which include Mary Bateson, 'Rules for Monks and Secular Canons After the Revival Under King Edgar', *EHR*, 9 (1894), 690-708; idem., 'A Worcester Cathedral Book of Ecclesiastical Collections, Made c. 1000 A.D.', *EHR*, 10 (1895), 712-31; Roger Fowler, "Archbishop Wulfstan's Commonplace Book" and the *Canons of Edgar*, *MJE*, 32 (1963), 1-10; idem., 'A Late Old English Handbook for the Use of a Confessor', *Anglia*, 83 (1965), 1-34 and Thomas P. Oakley, 'The Penitentials as Sources for Medieval History', *Speculum*, 15 (1940), 210-23. The issue is not of direct relevance to us.
110 Herzfeld, p. 38.
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104 Plan B.11.8; Cockayne, III, p. 166.
105 Eg. Plan B.11.9 and B. 12.
106 Plan B.11.9.3; ed. by H. Logeman, 'Anglo-Saxonica Minora', Anglia, 12 (1889), 497-518 (pp. 501-03).
107 They are discussed in ch. 6 below.
108 There is a large bibliography for the historical significance of such works, early examples of which include Mary Bateson, 'Rules for Monks and Secular Canons After the Revival Under King Edgar', EHR, 9 (1894), 690-708; idem., 'A Worcester Cathedral Book of Ecclesiastical Collections, Made c. 1000 A.D.', EHR, 10 (1895), 712-31; Roger Fowler, "Archbishop Wulfstan's Commonplace Book" and the Canons of Edgar', ME, 32 (1963), 1-10; idem., 'A Late Old English Handbook for the Use of a Confessor', Anglia, 83 (1965), 1-34 and Thomas P. Oakley, 'The Penitentials as Sources for Medieval History', Speculum, 15 (1940), 210-23. The issue is not of direct relevance to us.
110 Herzfeld, p. 38.
The Martyrology may therefore be termed a text for private reception without further discussion. The same is true for the 'Penitential of Pseudo-Ecgberht', which uses the first person plural authorially and which bears no addresses to the audience. Of some interest to us is the prefatory passage concerning confession, which opens:

Donne man to his scrifte gange [...] Donne sceal se sacerd hine acsigan hwylcne geleasan he to gode hæbbe, and hine menigfealdlice thitan to his sawle þearfe and myngian and þus cweæan: 'Gelyfst þu on god ælmhtigne and on þone sunu and on þone halgan gast [...]?' Ğif he cwæð 'ic wylle', cweð him þæne to: 'God ælmhtig gemiltsige þin, and me guenne þæt ic mote [...]'.

This passage has some resemblance to the vernacular dialogues, such as the Interrogationes Sigewulfi, which we shall discuss in the next chapter; for the moment we note only its similarity to three texts, two of which are classed as 'homilies' in the Plan but which address their audience consistently in the second person singular. Stylistically they resemble the sermons in terms of such features as repeated addresses to the audience, which presumably explains their designation; indeed one of the three texts, 'Ammonitio amici', occurs in two versions, the chief difference between which being that one addresses its audience by the second person plural throughout, and the other by the second person singular.

Eala þu wynsuman man, þu ægelæa wer, þu godes anlicyns, ic bidde þe, ic lære þe, ic bebeode þe: geclænsa þe, afoorma þe ærest þine eagan fram lyðre gesihde [...].

Eala ge wynsuman men and æþele wæpmen and wifmen, ge godes anlicnes, ic bidde eow and ic lære eow and ic bebeode eow: geclænsjæð eow and afoormjæð eow ærest eowe eagan fram lyðre gesihde [...].

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112 Raith, p. xii.
113 Plan B.1.6.1. Cf. also Plan B.11.9.4, ed. by Logeman, 'Anglo-Saxonica Minora', Anglia, 11 (1889), 97-120 (pp. 102-03), which gives the text for a congregation and the response by the priest.
114 'Address to an Individual', Plan B.11.10.4; 'Ammonitio amici', Plan B.3.4.39; 'De Confessione', Plan B.3.4.45. These are not the only texts in the vernacular to exhibit such features; cf. among others Plan B.3.4.16, printed by Kluge, 'Zu altenglischen Dichtungen', Estm, 8 (1885), 472-74. We take our selection as a representative sample.
115 Cf. also Plan B.11.10.3, ed. by Logeman, 'Anglo-Saxonica Minora', Anglia, 12 (1889), 497-518 (pp. 513-15), where the singular addresses have alternative forms in the plural number above the line at the beginning of the text.
117 Ibid.
The second of these has clearly been adapted to make a sermon; the former, a Byrhtferthian text which functions as an epilogue or an appendix to the *Enchiridion*,\(^{118}\) is intended for the reception of a single individual. While Byrhtferth's characteristic concern for his audience may suffice to explain the repeated and direct addresses to the audience, the 'Address to an individual', which closely resembles 'Ammonitio amici', cannot be so understood:

\[\text{Du man } \text{pe god scest. and me hæfst gesoht on godes willan. Nu wylle ic } \text{pe } \text{tæcan hwæt } \text{pe is god to donne on godes naman [...] gyf } \text{pu } \text{ponne hit for } \text{þinne tyddernysse gehealden ne mæge. gesprec sumne preosthades man } \text{pe } \text{þu to truwan habbe butan ic } \text{pe getreowe sy. and bet hit swa he } \text{pe } \text{tæce.}\(^{119}\)]

Unlike such texts as the 'Letter to Wulfgeat', there is a strong emphasis on the speaker, rather than the recipient: in other words, while the 'Letter to Wulfgeat' corresponds to the usual conception of a letter in that the implied speaker (Ælfric) appears to be distant from Wulfgeat, there is no such possibility in 'Address to an individual': as the phrase 'and me hæfst gesoht' indicates, the implied speaker and the implied recipient are physically together.\(^{120}\) 'De Confessione', like 'Penitential', gives the responses of the penitent:

\[\text{Leofa man, ic axje } \text{pe on drihtnes namen, hwylces geleafan } \text{þu beo to gode. nu munegje } \text{þe, leofa cild, þisse worde: ilyfist } \text{þu on god almihigne, } \text{pe is fæder, and on } \text{þone soþan sunæ and on } \text{þone halgan gast? ic ilyfe.}\(^{121}\)]

Like the sermons, therefore, these texts imply oral delivery: it is apparent from both their addresses and their content, however, that they were intended for only one recipient at a time. Their similarity to the 'Penitential of Pseudo-Ecgberht' allows us to deduce that these texts, like the 'Penitential' and unlike some sermons, need not have been delivered verbatim; rather, they appear to represent examples of the correct admonitions which a confessor was to provide after his approach by a penitent. These texts thus form the rare category of texts intended for oral delivery to an individual.

\(^{118}\) Baker, 'The Old English Canon', pp. 32-34; cf. also Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the Early Sections of the *Historia Regum* Attributed to Symeon of Durham', *ASE*, 10 (1982), 97-122 for a discussion of the Byrhtferthian corpus.

\(^{119}\) Ker, 'Three Old English Texts in a Salisbury Pontifical, Cotton Tiberius C. I', in *The Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 262-79 (pp. 275-76).

\(^{120}\) It is possible that 'Ammonitio amici' was also intended for oral delivery to an individual rather than for reading; however, Byrhtferth's perception of writing as an extension of conversation, to which we shall return in the conclusion below, forces us to exercise extreme caution in this matter. Cf. our discussion of the *Enchiridion* in ch. 2 above.

\(^{121}\) Napier, *Wulfstan*, p. 289.
While they could be described as texts for private reading, assuming that they were not in all cases used for verbatim oral delivery, this would be misleading: unlike the texts which are usually so designated, the addressee of the texts (60) is not the reader but the implied future hearer, while the addresser (ic) is not the author, but the reader himself at a future date. It is therefore evident that these confessional texts, all of which have consistent addresses in the second person singular and a common brevity and topic, represent a distinct category of reception, further demonstrating the considerable variety of styles of text and of reception which were practised in the Anglo-Saxon period.

We may now return to the technical religious vernacular prose and in particular to the 'Rule of St. Benedict' which, like the fragmentary vernacular 'Epitome of Benedict of Aniane', occurs as a continuous interlinear gloss to its Latin original in at least one of its versions. Such a text, like the Old English 'Rule of Chrodegang' and the 'Capitula of Theodulf' which are interlinear to their Latin originals, could not have been intended for oral delivery: while the Latin on which it is based may have been used for such a purpose it is unthinkable that the gloss itself, which follows the word-order of the Latin and is therefore independently unintelligible, could have been read out. Further, there seems little reason to suppose that the Latin texts were intended for oral delivery: the chapter-headings, the division into short sections and other extra-linguistic features all point strongly against such a supposition and indicate private reading. It is therefore the more unusual to find that the 'Rule of Chrodegang' and the 'Rule of St. Benedict' both use the inclusive first person plural, while the 'Capitula of Theodulf' and the 'Benedictine Office' address their audience directly by the second person plural, the last of which ends as follows:

Leofan men nu ic hæbbe be suman dæle ahrepod be ðam dæghwæmlican tidan-þenungan ðe man to nydrihte don sceall. [...] God us gefultumige to ure ðearfe swa his wylla sy. Amen.

122 All are concerned with confession and repentance; none is longer that a hundred lines in print.
124 Plan C.5; ed. by Napier, Chrodegang, pp. 119-28. This text has no references to its audience, using only the 'authorial we'.
125 Plan B.10.4.1 and B.10.6.2, ed. by Napier, Chrodegang, pp. 1-99 and 102-18 respectively.
126 In the last two texts, the strict vernacular translation of each section of the original is appended to its Latin passage, rather than occurring as an interlinear gloss.
127 To these we might add a large number of works including the 'Institutes of Polity' (Plan B.13.2), 'De ecclesiasticis gradibus' (Plan B.13.3) and 'Duties of Bishops' (Plan B.13.4), all of which use the inclusive first person plural. However, it seems unnecessary to attempt a comprehensive examination of these texts; it is sufficient to cite a few examples which do not conform to our expectations.
129 Ibid., pp. 101-02.
Of all these works, which we should expect either to lack any addresses to their audience or to use the second person singular, only a few, such as the 'Canons of Edgar', the 'Penitential of Pseudo-Ecgbert' and the 'Regularis Concordia' satisfy the first criterion and only the 'Rule of St. Benedict' the second, opening:

Gehyr ðu min bearn geboda ðines lareowes and anhyld ðinre heortan eare, and myngunge ðines arfaestan fæder lustlice underfoh and cafllice gefyl, ðæt ðu mid ðinre hyrsumnesse geswince to God gecyrre, þe ðu ær fram buge mid asolcennysse ðinre unhyrsumnesse [...] ¹³¹

The text also ends with a brief address ðu cymsst to ðam marum geþincþum lare [...] ¹³² These addresses, coupled with the features of the text which we mentioned above, should be sufficient for us to infer private reception; however, the frequent use of the inclusive first person plural, as well as the presence of the phrase 'us is miclom to warnienne, leofe gebropra [...]', ¹³³ deriving from the Latin 'cavendum est ergo omni hora fratres', ¹³⁴ prevents us from making such a statement without further inquiry. As we stated above, 'for a text to be classed in a given category, it is not sufficient for it merely to bear indications of a certain method of reception: it must also lack any hallmarks of any other kind of reception', and there seems no reason why we should, uniquely, refrain from applying this axiom here. These texts are therefore worthy of separate investigation, despite their non-Anglo-Saxon origins and despite the immediately apparent features of private reception which we have adduced; and just as we turned to the writs and charters to illuminate the 'letters', so here we may find explanatory evidence by turning to the works to which they are most closely akin: the law-codes.

There is a large body of scholarship concerning the law-codes, much of which need not concern us. The origin, authorship and historical and sociological relevance of these texts are not of direct importance to us: the legal materials are of interest here only to the extent that they share features with texts which are of moment, such as the writs for the letters and the law-codes for the Rules. Further, as Harmer noted, the legal

¹³⁰ The first, Plan B.13.1.1, ed. by Fowler, Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar, EETS os 226 (London: OUP, 1972), uses the first person plural only in an authorial sense. Cf. the discussion above for the second, which also uses the first person plural pronoun only in its authorial sense. The Regularis Concordia, Plan B.10.5, does not use the first person plural pronoun in an inclusive sense.

¹³¹ Schröer, Benediktinerregel, p. 1. Logeman calls the prologue from which this is taken a 'hortatory sermon' (Rule of St. Benet, p. vii); it is to be presumed that he uses the term in its widest sense, including the meaning of 'text for private and devotional reading'.

¹³² Schröer, p. 133.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 25.

¹³⁴ Logeman, p. 31.
materials cannot be regarded merely or primarily as literary products: rather, their function is the preservation and codification of information, for which the concept of 'reader' is secondary and applies in only the most abstract sense. It is to be expected, therefore, that few references to the audience should be found in these texts: the very term 'audience' has, for such works, different connotations from those which apply to the texts with which we are here primarily concerned. For these reasons, as well as on account of the sheer number of these texts, it is necessary to adduce only a few examples of the legal materials in order to demonstrate their differences from the literature with which we are concerned.

Firstly, we may note that the 'inclusive we' occurs in some charters: one ends with the line 'Godes blestung si mid us callon a on ecnysse. Amen' and another uses the pronoun extensively in its opening passage:

 [...] ure halige 7 ure rihhtwæs fæderes mid soðre gefæstunæge. 7 mid gelomrædræ menunge us gemenege ðæt we ðone ælmihtæ God ðæ we lúuiæ 7 we onbeleuæ mid inweardær gelusfulnesse ure heortæn 7 mid geornfulnesse godre wurke unatirendlice ondræden 7 luuiæ. Forði ðæ he scel geldan edleæn ealre ure weorke on domesdæge [...].

Both these charters are royal charters, the former of King Harold and the latter of Cnut, and it may well be that these, like the royal writs of which Harmer wrote, were 'intended to be read out in the shire court or other public assembly'. If so, then we have further evidence to suggest that the inclusive first person plural implies oral delivery. However it is also apparent that, whatever the manner of its promulgation may have been, the charter was essentially a reference-text and hence, that the references to the audience which such texts contain carry far less weight for the deduction of the manner of their reception than do those in the non-legal texts with which we are chiefly concerned. From this, we may infer that the use of the inclusive first person plural in the *Rules* is of only minor significance.

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136 Plan B.15.5.26; S1467; Robertson no. 91. It seems by now redundant again to remark that we have here a Gatchian ending, which cannot be taken as evidence of oral delivery for the piece.
137 Plan B.15.1.53; S959; Robertson no. 82.
138 Harmer, p. 85. While it could be alleged that these are examples of the 'majestic plural', there seems to be no evidence for such a usage among the Anglo-Saxons. For example, the law-code *V Æthelstan* (Liebermann, pp. 166-68) uses the first person singular; more importantly, there is no evidence whatever for the second person plural being used as a mark of respect: kings, saints, bishops and God are all addressed by the second person singular in Old English. Cf. Bruce Mitchell, *Old English Syntax*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), i, pp. 107-08.
This view is supported by the Anglo-Saxon vernacular law-codes. While these, like the two charters adduced above, may well have been promulgated orally, they are nonetheless reference-texts by design, even though some contain direct addresses to their audience in the second person plural:

Eadwerd cyning byt ðam gerefum callun, ðæt ge deman swa rihte domas swa ge rihtoste cunnon, 7 hit on ðære dombec stande. Ne wandiað for nanum ðingum folcriht to gerecceanne; ðæt gehwile spræce habbe andagan, hwæne heo gelæst sy, ðæt ge ðonne gereccan. [I Eadweard]¹³⁹

Others use the inclusive first person plural:

þæt we cwædon, þæt ure ælc scute IIII pæng to ure gemæne þearfe binnan XII monðum; 7 forgylodon þæt yrfe, þe syðdan genumen ware, þe we þæt feoh scuton; 7 hæfdon us ealle þa æscean gemæne. [VI Æthelstan]¹⁴⁰

We may therefore remark that the Rules, which do not conform to our expectations of a literary text intended for private reading, do conform to our expectations of a legal text and thus, that our method for determining the intended approach to a vernacular text is not damaged by the nonconformity of the 'Rule of Chrodegang' and other similar texts. The legal materials, of which the Rules may be regarded as a sub-class or variant, are of a fundamentally different nature to the 'literary' works with which we are concerned; it is therefore to be expected that they should exhibit different characteristics. We have adduced a selection of the legal works in this chapter only because they represent a large corpus of Anglo-Saxon vernacular prose, the omission of which would have left a large lacuna here, and because the Old English letters and monastic Rules, with which the charters, writs and law-codes have close connexions, could not be ignored in our survey of the vernacular nonsermons. Our brief examination of the legal texts has therefore served to illuminate the religious prose rather than the legal texts themselves, which cannot by virtue of their extent form a significant part of this research.

In these chapters, then, we have surveyed the majority of vernacular prose bearing direct addresses to its audience and have formed three groups, the first containing texts which were not intended for oral delivery, characterised by addresses to the audience in the second person singular, by the presence of extra-linguistic features such as diagrams, illustrations or chapter-headings, or simply by virtue of extreme length or brevity. Into this class fall the mathematical and botanical texts, as well as Ælfric's 'St.

Martin' from the *Lives of Saints*, some of the 'letters' and other works which we have not discussed, such as Ælfric's *Grammar* and *Glossary*.141 The second group which we have identified is the sermon category, which contains religious works addressing their audience by the second person plural. Between these two classes lie the confessional texts, which could be used either for private reading, but in a manner and with implications which are strikingly different from the other texts of that class, or for oral delivery, but to an individual rather than to the congregations which form the audience of texts in the sermon category. We have also noted that addresses embedded in direct quotations cannot be taken as evidence of the intended manner of delivery and that occasional uses of the second person singular in conjunction with the second person plural are rhetorical, rather than actual; we have further observed that the first person plural must be examined closely in each instance, in order to determine whether it constitutes a hidden address to its audience or whether it refers specifically to its author or generally to all men. We have lastly observed that the impersonal referent *(mon)* is to be found most commonly in texts which were not intended for oral delivery, but that its use is too ubiquitous for it to be taken as strong evidence.

Many Old English vernacular texts, however, bear no addresses to their audience. In the preceding discussion we described these by the ambiguous phrase 'reading texts', characterising them as works 'for which we cannot predict either the number of the audience or the style of reception'. Into this category fall many of the religious texts which have formed the subject of this chapter; while this may seem a comparatively small group, it must be remembered that we were here concerned only with religious prose and that this category also holds the Alfredian translations, the *Letter of Alexander to Aristotle*, the great majority of Old English poetry and dialogue texts such as *Solomon and Saturn* and the *Interrogationes Sigewulfi*. It is to these texts that we may now turn, in order to determine whether or not it is possible to predict either the number of their audience or the style of their reception and thus, to supplant the term 'reading text' with a more precise designation.

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141 Plan B.1.9.1 and B.1.9.2; ed. by J. Zupitza, *Ælfrics Grammatik und Glossar*, Sammlung englischer Denkmäler 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1880; repr. with introduction by H. Gneuss, Berlin: Weidmann, 1966). The former addresses its audience in the singular at, e.g., pp. 77 and 293; as one might expect, the *Glossary* has no addresses.
Remaining Prose

We have now determined whether various Old English prose texts were intended for visual or for solely aural reception, according to their references to the audience or, where such addresses were not present, by their similarity to other texts which could more easily be classified. Through this procedure it has been possible to categorise the great majority of Anglo-Saxon vernacular prose: however, the remainder bears few such addresses and must instead be categorised from external evidence and according to the secondary features which we have isolated as minor indicators of intended manners of reception. In beginning with the Alfredian translations, therefore, we must briefly summarise the historical evidence for the circumstances surrounding their production: having examined these we may then turn to a representative sample of the remaining prose, such as the Vision of St. Paul, the Letter of Alexander to Aristotle, Wonders of the East and the prose dialogue-texts.

There are seven Old English texts which are commonly grouped together as 'Alfredian translations', among which the Pastoral Care is prefaced by a letter addressed by the king to each of the bishops to whom a copy of the work was to be sent. Alfred laments the decline of Latin learning, and proposes a deceptively simple solution:

For ðy me ðynðs betre, gif iow swæ ðynðs, ðæt we eac sumæ bec, ða ðe niedbeðearfosta sien eallum monnom to wiotonne, ðæt we ða on ðæt geðiode wenden ðe we ealle geçnawan mægen, ond gedon, swæ we swide ealle magon mid Godes fultume, gif we ða stilnesse habbað, ðætte eall sio gioguz ðe nu is on Angelcynne friora monna, ðara ðe ða speda hæbbæn ðæt hie ðæm befeolan mægen, sien to liornunga ðîræste, ða hwile ðe hie to nanre ðerre note ne mægen, ðe ðone first ðe hie wel cunnen Englisc gewrit æredan. Lære mon sicðan furður on

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1 It now seems clear that only the Gregory's Pastoral Care, Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy, St. Augustine's Soliloquies and the first fifty psalms of the Psalter were translated by Alfred himself (Keynes and Lapidge, Alfred, p. 29; cf. also Bately, 'The Nature of Old English Prose', in Cambridge Companion, pp. 71-87 (p. 72)). Since the identity of the translators is not of direct concern, however, I shall continue to use the term 'Alfredian translation' as a convenience. Cf. also in this context Bately, 'Old English Prose Before and During the Reign of Alfred', ASE, 17 (1988), 93-138; idem., 'Lexical Evidence for the Authorship of the Prose Psalms in the Paris Psalter', ASE, 10 (1982), 69-96 and Scragg, 'The Corpus of Vernacular Homilies and Prose Saints' Lives before Ælfric', ASE, 8 (1979), 223-77.

2 Keynes and Lapidge, Alfred, p. 28.
This passage bears several indications for the intended use of the texts. Whitelock wrote:

Presumably he intended to have all the products of this scheme [the translation programme] widely circulated. He goes on to outline a plan for the education of all young freemen of adequate means until they could read English [...] a supply of English textbooks would therefore be necessary.

As Whitelock indicates, the preface describes the translation-programme as a future exercise, connected with the intention of enabling certain young men to learn to read in English. Had the king’s chief concern lain with the rapid dissemination of the works, then one should naturally expect them to be intended for oral delivery: in no other way could they be communicated to an illiterate public. However, such is not the implication of Alfred’s words. Rather, these works are to be reserved for the future educated male youth, with the intention that even if they are not to advance to holy orders and to learn Latin, they will at least have mastered an ability to read such texts. Thus, while Alfred’s comments do not indicate the means by which the texts were approached, they do at least imply a young, male audience with the educational capacity of reading the texts visually: a quality of audience which we have hitherto assumed only for botanical and mathematical pieces and for a few others, such as ’The Maccabees’ and ’St. Martin’.

In other words, while a high level of literacy was not necessary for the intended audience of Ælfric’s and Wulfstan’s sermons, the ’Alfredian translations’ - or at least, the texts which Alfred intended to translate or to have translated - were in themselves

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3 Sweet, Anglo-Saxon Reader, rev. by Whitelock, pp. 6-7.
4 Its historical relevance has been extensively discussed: see, for example, H. Gneuss, ’King Alfred and the History of Anglo-Saxon Libraries’, in Modes of Interpretation in Old English Literature, ed. by Phyllis Rugg Brown, Georgia Ronan Crampton and Fred C. Robinson (Toronto: UTP, 1986), pp. 29-49 (pp. 29-30), where he cites eleven scholars’ comments on the passage; see also Magoun, ’King Alfred’s Letter on Educational Policy According to the Cambridge MSS’, Medieval Studies, 11 (1949), 113-22 and idem., ’Some Notes on King Alfred’s Circular Letter on Educational Policy Addressed to his Bishops’, Medieval Studies, 10 (1948), 93-107, and the translation of the work in Keynes and Lapidge, Alfred, pp. 124-126; the notes to the text on pp. 293-96, and the references there cited.
6 Charles Plummer describes the Preface to the Pastoral Care as a preface to ’a whole series of translations’ (The Life and Times of Alfred the Great (Oxford: Clarendon, 1902), p. 152).
7 Bately’s suggestion that the texts may be divided into teaching-texts and works for leisure reading (’Old English Prose’, p. 138) seems difficult wholly to substantiate: as we show below, it is not necessary to propose such a dichotomy.
8 Cf. ch. 4 above.
9 While we cannot assume that the ’Alfredian translations’ are those which Alfred ’considered most necessary for all men to know’, the fact that the works were produced within a decade of each other
the goal of a literacy programme, and in themselves constituted the proof of the attainment of a good reading ability.\textsuperscript{10}

While the intended audience of the Alfredian translations must have been literate, therefore, it need not follow from this that the texts were intended for private reading. However, the conditions under which these works must have been appreciated, if received aurally, differ markedly from those of the sermons. As an illustration of this, we may note the length of the texts. It will be remembered that in our discussion of 'St. Martin', a text of 1,495 lines in print, we took its unusual length as an indication of the text's being of a different form to the sermons.\textsuperscript{11} The shortest of the Alfredian translations, St. Augustine's Soliloquies, is of a length comparable to 'St. Martin' while the longest, the vernacular Bede, compares favourably with both volumes of Ælfric's Catholic Homilies. The very length of these texts bears some implications for the intended manner of their approach, for if we assume that by 'reading the text' it is the whole text which is intended, then since the oral delivery of the Alfredian translations would have taken several days or, in the case of the Bede, several weeks, one would expect the texts to have an episodic form, or at least a facility for subdivision.\textsuperscript{12} Clearly, such features would be equally necessary for the oral delivery of the works in their Latin forms: it is therefore unsurprising that the sources from which the Alfredian works were translated are divided into books, chapters and sub-chapters. These divisions would have been indispensable aids to the reading process, enabling the lector to determine the size of the piece to be read: however, the use of numbered sections is not beneficial for listeners, who would have no clear indication of the ending of a section. Besides such visual features, phrases of closing would also be necessary for the aural audience, such as those in the Latin Orosius, rendered in Old English as 'her enda ū sio forme boc 7 onginā sio æfterre',\textsuperscript{13} 'her enda ū sio pridde boc

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\textsuperscript{11} Cf. ch. 4 above; it will be remembered that Bériou estimated about fifteen minutes as the average duration of a sermon ('La prédication', p. 122; cf. introduction above).

\textsuperscript{12} This would, of course, also be useful in private reading; for oral delivery, however, it would be indispensable.

\textsuperscript{13} Bately, Orosius, p. 35.
Other, lengthier phrases include:

Ne wene ic, cwæð Orosius, nu ic longe spell hæbbe to secegene, þæt ic his on þisse bec geendian mæge. Ac ic ðære anginnan sceal.16 [and] Nu ic wilde, cwæð Orosius, on foreweardæ þisse seofepan [sic] bec gerececean [...].17

Since these phrases are echoes of, or strict translations from, the original, they cannot in themselves be taken as direct evidence; however, where such phrases are lacking in the Latin, they are supplied in the Old English by the translators. For example, some significant departures from the Latin original in the Old English version of Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica are the omission of the chapter-lists for each individual book,18 which could not meaningfully have been received aurally; the omission of the annals,19 which are also better suited to private reading than to oral delivery and the integration into the main text of the phrases 'her endaþ seó æreste bec, 7 onginnéþ seó ðæþ', 'her endaþ seó æftræ bec' and 'her endað seó þridde bec',20 which in the Latin occur in conjunction with the chapter-headings.21 Similarly the translation, or rather summarised version, of St. Augustine's Soliloquies closes each of its three books with 'her endiað ʃa blastman þære forman boce', 'her endiað þa blastman þære æftræn bec þe we hatað Soliloquiorum' and 'her endiað þa cwidas þe Ælfred kining alæs of þære bec [...]'.22 as well as the passage:

þa cwæð ic: Nu þu hefst þa cwýdas geendod þe þu of ðisum twam bocum alese, and næfst me gyt geandweard be ðam þe ic þe nu niehst acsode, þæt wæs, be minum gewitte.23

Such additions as these, redundant for the visual reader, would render the texts more suitable for oral delivery, although they are not strong evidence for such an intended

14 Ibid., p. 83.
15 Ibid., p. 132.
16 Ibid., p. 53.
17 Ibid., p. 132.
19 Book V, chapter 24; Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 560-66. The retention of Bede's list of books from this chapter, which is written in more continuous prose than the annals and which could have been received aurally, may also be of significance.
20 Schipper, König Alfridges Übersetzung, pp. 105, 189 and p. 333 respectively.
21 One might also note the omission of the Latin 'lege feliciter' and 'lege felix' (Colgrave and Mynors, pp. 120 and 452 respectively).
22 Carnicelli, 'Soliloquies', pp. 83, 92 and p. 97 respectively.
23 Ibid., p. 92.
use. However, these ending-phrases point towards the most significant unifying feature of the Alfredian translations: each exhibits a heightened awareness of text. Each passage quoted above draws attention to the text as a physical object, as a book, rather than as words or as speech: a feature which enables us to discard at least one of the possible manners of reception for these texts, as we shall show.

Bishop Wulf’s preface to the translation of Gregory’s Dialogues, which was cited in the introduction above, draws the reader’s attention to the physical presence of the book through prosopopoeia:

Se ðe me rædan ðenc þeon mid rihtum geðance. [...] 
Bide þe se bisceop, se þe ðas boc begeat 
þe þu on þinum handum nu hafast ond sceawast [...].

Similarly, as we saw in chapter 2 above, Byrhtferth directs the eye of his reader to the diagrams in the Enchiridion with injunctions such as:

Her we hig wyllaþ amearkian, þa epactas 7 eac þa regulares lunares, þæt hig openlicre 7 orpedlice standun beforan þæs preostas gesyðie, þæt he mege butan geswynce heora geryna ascruhtian.

In these cases, which we have taken as paradigms for indicators of private reading, the physical aspect of reading is highlighted; the text is actually present, in the hands and before the eyes of the implied reader. Such is not the case with the sermons, which never refer within themselves to the form in which they occur, presenting themselves as ‘frozen speech’ rather than as text. Indeed, it is a fascinating question as to whether the Old English sermons were read out from the books to the congregations, or were first committed to memory by the priest and later delivered, apparently spontaneously, to the audience; in either case, the sermons in their written form may be said to have exercised a remote function in the aural reception of the text, for at the very least the book or quire in which they were contained need not have been present at the time of their delivery. Such is not the case with the Alfredian translations: here, the text must

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24 This does not, of course, apply to the Alfredian psalms.
27 I am here excluding extraneous material such as Ælfric’s prefaces and notes and am referring only to the sermons themselves.
28 P. R. Robinson suggests that while some sermons would have been read out from lectern books, others would have been read from small, portable booklets (Self-contained Units in Composite Manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon period, ASE, 7 (1978), 231-38). However, it also seems possible that a booklet, which ‘would have fitted into a satchel or sleeve’ (p. 238), could have served as an aide-memoire after the priest had familiarised himself with its contents, rather than for verbatim reading.
have been present and, most importantly, known to be present by its aural audience. The presence of the book would have been a necessary part of the reading of, and of the listening to, the text.

Similar phrases could be drawn from the remaining Alfredian translations. The end of the first book of the translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*, following the Latin, runs: 'Gregorius him ðswarode [...] ac eft we sprecæ ðis freolicor ð bealdlicor, gif we nimað opere fruman foreweradre bec ðissera æfterfylgendra spella'.

The translator then departs from his source, continuing:

Nu is geendod seo forme boc heora twegra gespræces Gregoryes ðæs papan ð Petres his diacones, ð her on ðysan ðpran leafe oging ðæs æftere boc heora gespræces be manigfealdum wundrum ðæs æadigan weres ð ðæs æfæstan abbudes sancte Benedictes.

Here, the reader is directed to the physical location of the following section, which starts 'on ðysan ðpran leafe'; this contrasts with the internal cross-references in the sermons, which remind their audience of what was said 'ær', earlier. When a text is to be received aurally, only temporal directions are possible; here, visual directions are used. The translator again departs from his source at the beginning of the third book:

Hér ogingne se þridda flod of ðam neorxnawanglican wylle, þe þurh þone gyldenan muþ forð aarn ðæs halgan papan ð biscope sancte Gregoryes. [...] On þam flode he was sprecende be haligra manna wundrum ð þawum, swa he ær dyde on þam ærrum bocum, þ ðus ðæs cweþende.

Similar examples may be found at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth book of the *Dialogues*, while Gregory's *Pastoral Care* opens:

Ḍara byðenna hefignesse, eall þæt ic his geman, ic awrite on ðisse andweardan bec, þylæs hi hwæm leohte ðynenc to underfonne [...] 7 forðy ic hi todale on feower [...] from ðære durý sylfre ðisse bec, þæt is from onginne ðisse sprecce, sint adrifene 7 getælde ða unwaran.
have been present and, most importantly, known to be present by its aural audience. The presence of the book would have been a necessary part of the reading of, and of the listening to, the text.

Similar phrases could be drawn from the remaining Alfeldian translations. The end of the first book of the translation of Gregory's Dialogues, following the Latin, runs: 'Gregorius him 7swarode [...] ac eft we spreca5 |is frelocior 7 bealdlicor, gif we nima5 oferne fruman foreweradre bec 7issera æfterfylgendra spella'. The translator then departs from his source, continuing:

Nu is geendod seo forme boc heora twegra gespæreces Gregories 7æs papan 7 Petres his diacones, 7 her on 7ysan 0|ran leafe ongin5 seo æftere boc heora gespæreces be manigfealdum wundrum 7æs æadigan weres 7æs æfæstan abbudes sancte Benedictes.30

Here, the reader is directed to the physical location of the following section, which starts 'on 7ysan 0|ran leafe'; this contrasts with the internal cross-references in the sermons, which remind their audience of what was said 'ær', earlier. When a text is to be received aurally, only temporal directions are possible; here, visual directions are used. The translator again departs from his source at the beginning of the third book:

Her onginne5 se 7ridda flod of 7am neorxawanglican wylle, 7e 7urh 7one gyldenan mu5 for5 aam 7æs halgan papan 7 biscopes sancte Gregories. [...] On 7am flode he wæs sprecende be haligra manna wundrum 7æwum, swa he ër dyde on 7am ærrum bocum, 7 ëus wæs cwepende.31

Similar examples may be found at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth book of the Dialogues,32 while Gregory's Pastoral Care opens:

7ara byr|ëenna hefignesse, eall 7æt ic his geman, ic awrite on ëisse andweardan bec, 7ylæs hi hwæm leohete ëyncen to underfonne [...] 7 for5y ic hi todzele on feower [...] from ëære dura selfre ëisse bec, 7æt is from onginne ëisse spræcce, sint adrifene 7 getælde ëa unwaran.33

29 Hecht, Bischof Warferths von Worcester Übersetzung, p. 91.
30 Ibid., p. 92.
31 Ibid., p. 179.
32 Ibid., p. 259 and p. 260.
33 Sweet, Pastoral Care, pp. 23-24.
Finally, the Old English Boethius frequently calls attention to itself as a text, in phrases such as:

\[ \text{Dar } \text{h] wave gemyndest } \text{a word } \text{pe ic } \text{pe } \text{ræde on } \text{pære forman bec } [...] \text{u } \text{rædest on } \text{pære ilcan bec. } \text{æt } \text{h] ongæte } \text{æt God weolde } \text{hisses middan geardes,}^{34} \]

as well as 'swa swa we ær rædon hisses ilcan bec'\(^35\) and 'ic pe ræde gefyn ær on hisses ilcan bec'.\(^36\) Since it would seem highly unlikely that the translations carried out under the auspices of the king and his 'learned advisers'\(^37\) would repeatedly have retained features which were nonsensical in their transformed contexts, we must presume that these references to the physical aspect of the texts were intentionally added to, and preserved in, the Alfrician translations and thus, that any aural reception for the texts would have been of a wholly different quality to that for the sermons. The aural reception of such works would have formed a visual reading by proxy or 'shared reading', in which the book was visibly present before the eyes of the reader and the words were, consciously, transferred from the page to the listeners through the lector. Such is not the case with the sermons, where the book itself need not have been present and the words could, to all appearances, have originated from the speaker rather than from the (absent) author of the text. There is, thus, a difference of some magnitude between these forms of text in terms of the experience of the audiences.

Closely related to the awareness of text is the narratorial voice, or the seeming identity of author and speaker. With the exception of Wulfstan's 'Sermo Lupi', which bears a Latin title in which the author is indicated if not named, no sermon in Old English has a clear authorial presence: the identity and personal background of the author is never adduced within the sermons. Not only does Ælfric, for example, never refer to the demands of the abbacy in his sermons, but even less personal information, such as the current political situation or the geographical surroundings, is absent.\(^38\) Such an absence of particular and specific references to the environment may seem strange in the context of the 'quotidian style'\(^39\) for which Anglo-Saxon vernacular sermons are noted, unless one considers that deliberate pains were taken by the authors for an anonymity of voice not only in order for the sermons to be re-used and re-distributed but also with the intention that, for the congregation, the speaker could be

\(^{34}\) Fox, Boethius, p. 156, cf. Bieler, Anicii Manlii, p. 60.
\(^{37}\) Keynes and Lapidge, Alfred, p. 28.
\(^{38}\) While it is true that some sermons do comment on a general decline or on Viking activity, such remarks are too general to be of relevance here.
\(^{39}\) Robertson, Devotional Prose, p. 179.
presumed to be the author. This interpretation is valid regardless of whether the priest made use of a written text in his delivery or memorised the text in advance, for the intended effect, that the speaker used his own words to admonish or to encourage his own congregation, would have been achieved in either case. Such is not the case for Byrhtferth’s *Enchiridion* and the Alferian translations, where the lector is recognisably not the author. In no circumstance could the delivery of such texts have resembled an *ex tempore* performance such as was possible and, perhaps, desirable for the sermons: there is no identity of speaker and narrator.

Further, three of these texts present a further problem: the lack of identity of addressee and implied audience. As we have seen in previous chapters, with the exception of pious apostrophes the vernacular texts address the actual audiences which their authors envisaged, whether a congregation, the recipient of a private letter or an imagined individual. However, the *Soliloquies*, the *Dialogues* and the *Consolation of Philosophy* all occur in their original versions in the form of dialogues where each speaker, himself a character in the text, addresses another, similarly text-bound character. No concessions are made to the external audience, the implied readers or listeners, beyond such phrases as we have cited above, where Boethius, Augustine and Gregory specifically call attention to their nature as literary constructs and refer to their previous comments in 'the last book' or 'earlier in this same book'. The majority of the sources of the Alferian translations bear no direct references to their intended audience: just as the lector cannot be the author, so the recipient of the text can have no illusions that it was aimed at or intended for him, the illusion which the sermons deliberately create and which Byrhtferth seeks to generate by his numerous and varied addresses to his audience. To reapply a comment of Gordon Williams, 'the reader / audience is an eavesdropper.' There are, indeed, difficulties with the very term of 'addressed audience' for these texts, for the audience of Gregory is Peter, that of Augustine, Reason and Wisdom is that of Boethius, each of whom in turn becomes the speaker and the previous speaker, the audience. In these three texts, there was

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40 It seems to be precisely this anonymity which informs Gatch’s article 'The Unknowable Audience of the Blickling Homilies' (*ASE*, 18 (1989), 99-115), remarking that 'little sense of a specific congregation or reading audience prevails' (p. 115), and that the Blickling manuscript ‘gives no [...] information about the audience, its conditions, its spiritual needs and its interests’ (p. 114). However, as we have argued above, the details for which Gatch looks in the sermons would greatly limit the potential audience of the works: further, the paucity of information is not limited to, but rather exemplified by, the Blickling texts. A more constructive title would be 'The Unknowable Audience of the Old English Sermons', the evidence and reasons for which we have adduced above.

41 I am not including the 'epistolary prefaces' in which, for example, Bede addresses Ceolwulf and Gregory, in his *Pastoral Care*, John; clearly, their authors envisaged a wider audience for their works than their named addressees alone.

42 Gordon Williams, 'Poet and Audience in Senecan Tragedy: *Phaedra* 3.38-430’, in *Author and Audience in Latin Literature*, ed. by Jonathan Powell and Tony Woodman (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), pp. 138-49 (p. 138). His comment originally applies to 'much of the poetry that was composed from the time of Catullus to the death of Horace' (ibid.).
originally no directly addressed external audience: however, the translation of the texts from Latin to the vernacular also transformed the presentation of the dialogues, an important change which is relevant not only here but which will also assist our subsequent examination of Adrian and Ritheus, Solomon and Saturn and the other dialogue-texts.43

Commenting on the opening of Alfred's Soliloquies, Thomas Carnicelli noted that 'the Latin text begins with direct speech. Alfred, however, seems uncertain of what form to use. He adds a speaker's rubric, '€a reahet he', but translates the speech into indirect discourse'.44 The difference between 'volventi mihi multa ac varia mecum diu ac per multos dies seduluo quaeoenti memetipsum ac bonum meum [...]45 and Æa reahet he, hys mod for oft geasciende and smeagende mislicu and selcuð þing, and ealles swiðst ymbe hyne sylfne [...]46 may appear minor, but is of great importance for the implied audience: a third speaker, or better a narrator, has been added. While this alteration may serve to bridge the logical discrepancy between the introductory passage, written in the voice of Alfred, and the dialogue proper, in which the first person singular denotes Augustine, it also confers something of the structure of narrative prose upon the dialogue. As we have noted, within the dialogue itself it is the characters who form the addressed audience, but the phrase Æa reahet he' and the use of indirect rather than direct speech indicates Alfred's concern for the eventual reader or hearers, for it is to them that the alterations are addressed: only the narrator and the audience, being external to the dialogue, could describe St. Augustine in the third person singular.

Similarly, the Old English Boethius contains a narrative presence, external to the speakers, which is not present in the Latin. The original text opens with a poem in the first person singular:

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi,

Flebilis heu maestos coger inire modos.47

The Old English, however, begins with a short biography of Boethius and an account of the events of his time. Thus, the prose translation of the opening poem is prefaced:

7 he [Boethius] Æa nanre frofre be innan þam carcerne ne gemunde. ac he gefeoll

43 For a general discussion of the dialogue form, see Elizabeth Merrill, The Dialogue in English Literature, Yale Studies in English 42 (New York: Holt, 1911), esp. ch. 2: 'The Dialogue in the Middle Ages'.
44 Carnicelli, Soliloquies, p. 92.
45 Watson, Soliloquies, p. 22.
46 Carnicelli, Soliloquies, p. 48.
Further, the Old English paraphrases the original text which follows the poem, 'haec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem querimoniam [...]', into ŝa ic ŕa Ŕis leop. cwæð Boethius. geomriende asungen hæfe [...]', and prefaces most of the succeeding speeches with phrases such as 'cwæð Boethius', 'cwæð he' and 'pa clipe se Wisdom'. The effect of such additions is to render a dialogue into narrative prose, and in so doing to involve an external audience, the reader or hearers, whose ultimate role in the text is invisible in the Latin original. Similarly the Orosius, which in Latin is presented as direct speech in the first person singular, is rendered as indirect discourse, adding the phrase 'cwæð Orosius' to the majority of the passages in which Orosius refers to himself, while the Dialogues of Gregory are also transformed from dialogue to narrative prose and to indirect discourse through phrases such as 'Gregorius him andswarde', 'Gregorius cwæð', 'Gregorius him to cwæð' and 'Gregorius ĕa gyt spræc'. Through these alterations the form of the text is changed and a narrator added, whose remarks and comments can be addressed only to the audience of the text rather than to the characters within it. This mechanism would facilitate oral delivery by effectively reducing the number of voices in the text to one, that of the narrator: further, since the narrator is external to the speakers, the implied audience is involved to far greater a degree than in the original versions, and the distance between the author and the narrator reduced.

We may now rehearse the argument up to this point. Our examination of the Alfredian translations has established firstly that the works contain embedded phrases of opening and of closing, which are not always present in the Latin originals and which would be of more benefit to an aural than to a visual audience. Secondly, the works exhibit a heightened awareness of text, not only through the phrases of closing but also by more sophisticated means, in which the speakers call attention to their role as literary characters embedded in books in an explicit manner. Thirdly, we have seen that where a text originally occurs in the form of dialogue, some attempts have been made to transform its presentation into narrative prose: this would allow for a far less flamboyant style of oral delivery than would a strict translation. Fourthly, we have noted the paucity of references to the audience and finally, we have commented on their extreme length when compared to the sermons and other works which we have regarded as suitable for oral delivery. Each of these points strongly implies that solely
aural reception would be unsuitable for the Alfredian translations, a view which is confirmed by the *Dialogues* of Gregory, which follow the prosopopoëic preface quoted above with:

Forpon nu ærestan we magon gehyran, hu se eadega 7 se apostolica papa sanctus
Gregorius spræc to his deacone [...].\(^{50}\)

Since this sentence follows a direct reference to private reading, the use of the first person plural must be understood as bridging the distance between reader and author by the inclusive pronoun: thus, we may state with confidence that the vernacular *Dialogues* of Gregory was intended for private reading and hence, that the other Alfredian translations were also composed on the understanding that they were to be received by individuals, rather than by groups.

While this interpretation of the Alfredian translations is valid, it is not in itself complete. Certainly, Byrhtferth's *Enchiridion* was intended for private reading, for in no other way could the work have been understood: however, it will be remembered that while the Old English sermons were designed for oral delivery to a listening group, they could also have been used for private devotional reading, or sometimes merely as a base for sermons.\(^{51}\) There is therefore an important distinction between the prime intended use and the sole possible use and, as we have observed, certain features such as internal closing-phrases and the transformation of dialogue to narrative prose point towards a potential for oral delivery. What is certain is that any aural reception for the Alfredian translations would have been of a different style from that of the sermons, and here we may turn to further external evidence for the Anglo-Saxon use of oral delivery.

It will be remembered that in our discussion of the saints' *Lives* and certain other devotional prose texts, we were unable to state whether the works were intended for meditative or for public reading, commenting that both forms of reception might have been possible; the external evidence concerning the approach to these texts therefore not only elucidates their use but also, by analogy, deepens our understanding of the intended approach to the Alfredian translations. Firstly, the *Lives* were read aloud in churches to listening congregations:

If a particular saint were deemed to be worthy of particular veneration, a *passio* or *vita* [...] would be read out on the appropriate feast day, either in the refectory while

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\(^{50}\) Hecht, p. 2, following his MS C. His MS H offers the alternative 'cuðlice we magon nu ærestan gehyran [...]', a variation which for these purposes is immaterial.

\(^{51}\) Spencer (*English Preaching*, p. 36) suggests that 'homiliaries served a dual purpose 'for reading or for preaching' [since] the Carolingian exegetes', citing Hrabanus Maurus, 'hoc opusculum ad legendum vel ad praedicandum' (p. 374 n. 68; Maurus is edited in PL 110, col. 10). As we have shown, it is possible to describe their 'dual purpose' more precisely.
the monks or clerics dined in silence, or else during the Night Office on the vigil of
the saint's day, when the passio or vita would be distributed in separate lections.52

This summary is supported by numerous primary sources. For example, a code of
instructions for the novices of Christ Church, Canterbury contains the passage:

Ibique oculos semper habeat in mensa et aurem in lectione. [...] Si uero sonitum
quod absit fecerit per quem fratres in aliquo turbentur, uel sacra lectio impediatur,
uel minus audiatur [...].53

We may therefore state with confidence that saints' Lives, monastic Rules, passages of
the Bible and other devotional texts were approached through aural reception in formal
environments, which contrasts with one of the styles of reading described by Asser in
his Life of King Alfred:

Quorum omnium doctrina et sapientia regis indesinenter desiderium crescebat et
implebatur. Nam die noctuque, quandocunque aliquam licentiam haberet, libros ante
se recitare talibus imperabat - non enim unquam sine aliquo eorum se esse pateretur-
quapropter pene omnium librorum notitiam habebat, quamvis per se ipsum aliquid
adhuc de libris intelligere non posset. Non enim adhuc aliquid legere inceperat.54

While we may infer that these descriptions refer to Latin texts, there seems no reason to
suppose that the descriptions which they provide would not have been applicable to
vernacular texts, especially the devotional works such as those which Alfred translated
or commissioned. Thus, it is readily apparent that there were two separate forms of oral
delivery which were available, apart from the sermon-style: a formal style, which the
Constitutions describe, and the more informal style which Asser describes. As we have
seen, in the case of the sermons the homiliary may have been absent at the time of
delivery, with a direct interaction between the speaker and his audience, while in the
case of shared reading, the book is the focus both of the audience and of the speaker.
When the text formed the main, or even the sole, intellectual focus, the speaker himself
was relatively immaterial; the group could have taken turns to read out the book and
other features associated with private reading may have been present, such as the
potentials of repetition or of interruption. This informal style contrasts with the formal

Cf. also pp. 34, 49 and p. 72.
54 William H. Stevenson, ed., Asser's Life of King Alfred (Oxford: Clarendon, 1904; repr. with article
by Whitelock, 1959), ch. 77, pp. 62-63. Cf. ch. 88, p. 73, for a similar description of reading to the
king.
style, where the speaker and audience were not interchangeable. It is possible that such was also a valid approach to the sermons; the difference is that for the saints’ Lives, when read in church or in the chapters and refectories, such was the necessary and sole approach.

It should be noted, however, that this subdivision of 'shared reading' cannot be applied in all cases to the Old English reading-texts. While it is important for our understanding of Anglo-Saxon textual reception to note the differences between these formal and informal styles, their application depends not on the form of the text but upon its perceived value. Similarly, while the mode of reception which we have termed 'private reading' may be further subdivided into ruminatio and silent reading, we have not attempted such a division here: the ultimate arbiter of which method of approach to use was the reader himself, whose choice cannot be reconstructed with any certainty. It is apparent that the more secular works, such as the Leechbooks, would not have been read by the ruminatio-style, which would have been appropriate only for devotional works: however, the approach to more intermediate works cannot be inferred and may indeed have varied between readers, who may not have had identical perceptions of the value of their texts. Similarly, the decision as to whether the Orosius, for example, would have been read from the lectern, in the refectory or by the informal style would have rested with the personal opinion of the abbot: it is also possible that some passages of the Bede would have been deemed suitable for the lectern, while others would not. Thus, it is possible that the very texts which Asser read to Alfred might elsewhere have been read to monks and novices in the chapters and refectories, or have been chosen by monks for private reading at the Lenten distribution of books, and it would be difficult to formulate an argument which would enable us to distinguish between these uses in all cases: there is no vernacular equivalent to Alcuin’s preface to his Life of St. Willibrord, ‘where he explains that the prose is intended to be read out publicly to the members of an ecclesiastical community, but the verse is to be meditated upon in private by individual members of the community’. What is certain is that the Alfredian translations and saints’ Lives may be termed 'reading-texts', which we may now define more precisely as 'texts which seem most likely to have been approached through private reading, but which were also amenable to shared readings under certain conditions': a definition partly supported by the one piece of external evidence for the use of these texts.

In Alfred the Great: Asser’s ‘Life of King Alfred’ and other Contemporary Sources, Keynes and Lapidge note that ‘the chronicler Æthelweard implies that the

king's translations were given public reading, no doubt among the close circle of collaborators in the first instance. This comment derives from a passage in the *Chronicle of Æthelweard* for the year 899, which reads:

Nam ex Latino rhetorico fasmate in propriam uerterat linguam uolumina, numero ignoto, ita varie, ita præopime, ut non tantum expertioribus sed et audientibus liber Boetii lachrymosus quodammodo suscitaretur motus.

Unfortunately, this passage lends itself to various renderings, from ' [...] not only for scholars, but for any who might hear it read' to ' [...] not only in those familiar with it but even in those hearing it (for the first time)'. The former translation offers a distinction between those able to read, and those able only to hear, the text: the latter, between those more and less familiar with the work, for hearing was as much a part of private reading as sight. Thus, while Æthelweard indicates either private reading or some form of public reading for the *Boethius*, his vocabulary and phrasing are insufficiently precise for his statement to be taken as firm evidence for either manner of reception: and since we cannot refine our classification of the Alfredian texts at present, we may now conclude our examination of the remaining narrative prose works before turning to the dialogue-texts.

Having identified several styles of reception which were available and practised in Anglo-Saxon England, an examination of the remaining prose works in the light of this identification will both test the deductions which we have made so far and sharpen the distinctions between our categories. We may begin with the *Vision of St. Paul*, a text which occurs in MSS Bodleian Junius 85-86 and which has been altered in order to produce a continuity of sense with the *Address of the Soul to the Body* which follows it. The editor of the *Vision* considers the manuscript in which it occurs to be a collection of texts selected by a monk with certain spiritual preoccupations [...] our manuscript represents the formative stages of [...] an anthology [...] assembled specifically for use in Lent, and presumably sees its contents as intended for oral delivery, as she implies in the words: 'there would be no better way to instill the proper Lenten spirit of self-denial than to remind an audience of the claims of charity and of the judgment each soul undergoes'. However, while the *Vision of St. Paul* may be

57 Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred*, p. 35.
59 Ibid.
60 Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred*, p. 191.
61 *Plan B.3.5.1*; ed. Healey, *Old English Vision*.
62 Ibid., pp. 5-6 and p. 11.
63 Ibid., pp. 15-16.
64 Ibid., p. 16.
identified as a sermon by its use of 'men þa leofestan' in its opening line, its abrupt opening of 'and' indicates that the work is incomplete as it stands and could not have been used for verbatim oral delivery in its surviving form. The confused order of the leaves of the manuscript might indicate that the state of the Vision is accidental rather than deliberate; as Robinson writes:

A small booklet, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 85, fols. 18-24, containing Ælfric's homily for the first Sunday in Lent from the second Series of Catholic Homilies is now part of a collection of four homily booklets, all of tiny format; each of them has soiled outer pages suggesting that it once circulated independently.

It would therefore seem that the manuscript is a grouping of separate booklets whose contents shared certain themes, which the compiler apparently attempted to combine into a continuous whole which would be suitable for private reading: thus, we have further evidence that sermons were received visually and may describe the Vision of St. Paul as a work which, while originally intended for oral delivery, is in its current form most usable for private reading.

The Vision of St. Paul, besides revealing the possibilities for transforming the use of a work, also raises a further point concerning the awareness of text in opening with the line '7 men þa leofestan hit sægð her on Ḟisum halgum gewrite'. This reference within the work to its physical nature as a 'gewrit' is unparalleled in Ælfric's Catholic Homilies, which describe themselves with such words as 'cwyde', 'spel' and 'racu': terms which, as we have noted above, neither necessitate nor imply a written form for the works; in the Catholic Homilies the only specific references to the presence of written texts describe the biblical readings which preceded the sermon, such as 'her is geraþ on þisum godspelle, þe we nu gehyrdon of ðæs diacones muðe' and 'ic wolde eow træhtian þis godspel, ðæ mann nu beforan eow rædde'. Therefore, we may infer that while the Vision of St. Paul would have been physically present before its audience at the time of its delivery, many of the Catholic Homilies need not have been, but could have been memorised in advance and delivered as an apparently spontaneous performance. Thus, we may make a tentative distinction between two styles of oral delivery and between two styles of sermon: the first as verbatim delivery from a lectern-book or booklet and the second as an apparently ex tempore performance by the lector.

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65 On this, see Willard, 'The Address of the Soul to the Body', PMLA, 50 (1935), 957-83 and Healey, Old English Vision, pp. 4-16.
66 While considering the question insoluble, Healey (ibid., p. 6) leans more towards the possibility of deliberate ordering.
67 P. R. Robinson, 'Self-contained Units', p. 238.
68 Healey, p. 63.
69 Thorpe, I, pp. 152 and 166.
who had earlier familiarised himself with the text. Before returning to the remaining prose texts, therefore, we may briefly re-examine the sermons in the light of this possibility.

We have previously observed that Ælfric’s Lives of Saints represents a miscellaneous collection of sermons, nonsermons and reading-texts. Three of its sermons may now be classed as ‘texts intended for verbatim oral delivery’, as is evident from phrases such as ‘we habbaþ nu gesæd sceortlice on ðysum gewryte hu se halga marcus was gemartyrod. Nu wylle we eow seegan [...]’;70 the address by the second person plural indicates oral delivery, while the description of the text as ðysum gewryte’ indicates the physical presence of a text. Similarly, ‘St. Maur’ contains the phrase ‘swa swa þeos boc sægþ swutelic her bæftan’,71 while ‘St. Edmund’ has ‘and eft ða þa seo boc com to us binnan feawum gearum þa awende we hit on englisc. swa swa hit herærfter stent’.72 Further, two of the Blickling texts and one Vercelli text may now be termed ‘texts intended for verbatim oral delivery’, since they contain such phrases as :

Men þa leofestan, her us manaþ 7 mynegaþ on þissum bocum 7 on þissum halgum gewrite, be þisse halgan tide weorþunga þe we nu todæg mæræian sceolan 7 weorþian [...]73

Other, similar phrases include ‘men þa leofestan, gehyræþ nu hwæt her sægþ on þissum bocum’74 and ‘men ða leofestan, manað us 7 myngæþ þeos halige boc’.75 Unfortunately, the term ‘rædinge’ seems too imprecise to allow us to place other sermons within the category of ‘verbatim oral delivery’; similarly, the phrase ‘her sægþ’, despite the physical implications of the ‘her’, cannot be taken as conclusive evidence of verbatim delivery, for the referent could be not the vernacular text but a Latin work which was read previously and which the Old English sermon seeks to amplify and to interpret. This caveat is particularly true for sermons concerned with biblical texts, but the possibility of its also applying to saints’ Lives cannot be ignored.76 Thus, it would be advisable not to term, for example, the ‘St. Andrew’ piece from the Blickling book a ‘text for verbatim delivery’, despite its opening of ‘her

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73 Morris, Blickling, p. 161.
74 Ibid., p. 136.
75 Scragg, Vercelli, p. 158.
76 See, for example, Ælfric’s ‘Second Sunday after Easter’ and ‘On the Greater Litany’ from the Catholic Homilies, which use variants of the phrase þis godspel, þe nu geraed waes, cwþ [...]’. Hence, the Blickling text ‘Shrove Sunday’ and Vercelli I and V cannot, despite their references to ‘this gospel’ or ‘this reading’, be seen as texts for verbatim delivery.
Despite the severe limitations of this method, however, it has yielded the fact that neither the Catholic Homilies of Ælfric nor the sermons of Wulfstan refer to themselves either as 'bocum' or as 'gewritum', and since these are the works which, as we have shown above, are the most likely of the 'sermons' to have been received aurally, we may now state that texts are divisible into those which could, and those which could not, have been delivered independently from their manuscript forms.

The remaining narrative vernacular prose texts which have not been examined above may be treated briefly. An excellent example of a sermon which stands at the furthest point on the spectrum of reception from the sermons of Wulfstan is the Life of Machutus which, while divided into chapters headed in Latin, and bearing a list of those chapter titles in its Latin version, nonetheless addresses its audience by 'leofestan gebropra'. While this could be dismissed as a strict translation from the Latin original of 'fratres dilectissimi', the fact that the phrase was not omitted and may have been retained deliberately implies at least a potential for oral delivery. We may therefore regard the text as a sermon, but of a wholly different kind from those contained in the Catholic Homilies. The Vision of Leofric bears no references to its audience and may therefore be termed a 'reading-text'; its opening of 'her gesutelaða gesihelde ðe Leofric eorl gesæh' provides no assistance for our understanding of its intended manner of reception. The same is true for the Letter of Alexander the Great to Aristotle, which opens 'her is seo gesegenis alexandres epistoles [...] and which bears no addresses to its audience: the most that may be deduced is that these works would, if received aurally, have been approached through verbatim or group reading. Similarly, the Life of St. Christopher bears no addresses although its ending is worthy of note here. Following the ending-phrase 'se rixað mid fæder 7 mid suna 7 mid ðam halgan gast a butan ende', it continues:

'5yses eac bæd se halga cristoforus of ðære niðstan tide ær he his gast on sende 7 cwæð drihten min god syle gode mede ðam þe mine þrowunga awite 7 þa ecean

77 Morris, Blickling, p. 229.
78 Plan B.3.3.13, ed. by Yerkes, The Old English Life of Machutus, Toronto Old English Series 9 (Toronto: UTP, 1984).
79 Cf. ibid., pp. xlv-xlvi.
80 Ibid., p. 3.
81 Ibid., p. 2.
82 Plan B.4.2; ed. by Napier, 'An Old English Vision of Leofric, Earl of Mercia', TPS, (1907-10), 182-86.
83 Ibid., p. 182.
85 Ibid., p. 1.
86 The direct addresses to Aristotle by the second person singular pronoun cannot, of course, be considered as addresses to the audience.
87 Plan B.3.3.4, Rypins, pp. 68-76.
88 Ibid., p. 76.
edlean þam þe hie mid tearum ræde.89

While this certainly refers to the reading of the text by an individual, there seems no reason to assume that private reading was necessarily the sole intended approach to the text: the 'reader' of the text could well have had a listening audience. The same is true for *Apollonius of Tyre*,90 which bears no addresses to its audience until its epilogue:

> Her endað ge wea ge wela Apollonius þæs tiriscan, ræde se þe wille. And gif hi hwa ræde, ic bidde þæt he þas awændednesse ne tæle, ac þæt he hele swa hwæt swa þar on sy to tale.91

It is certain that these epilogues address the implied reader in the singular, and thus imply private reading; however, they do not necessitate such an approach, and should therefore more cautiously be termed 'reading-texts'. Only *Wonders of the East*,92 of all the remaining narrative prose works, has any claim to be termed a 'text intended for private reading', and even here some caution must be applied. Since the work contains neither addresses to its audience nor references to itself as a text, any categorisation of the piece must rest on its illustrations: however, the drawings are not an integral part of the text, as in the *Herbarium*, and the reader is nowhere asked to look at an illustration. Further, there are no such phrases as 'as we show here', such as we found with the *Enchiridion* and, to a lesser extent, in the Alфredian translations: such an absence is noteworthy. In addition, while the Old English version of *Wonders of the East* in MS BL Cotton Vitellius A. XV, the bilingual Old English and Latin version in MS BL Cotton Tiberius B. V and the Latin version in MS Bodleian 614 are all illustrated,93 the illustrations neither correspond exactly with each other nor, in some cases, with the part of the text in which they occur: thus, while it is clear that drawings could have been of no benefit to those receiving the text aurally, the absence of the illustrations would not have been a hindrance to the full appreciation of the narrative. *Wonders of the East* could, therefore, have been read aloud to a listening audience and cannot be termed a work for solely private reception: thus, we must class it as a 'reading-text'.

89 Ibid.
91 Ibid., p. 42.
Another text which is illustrated in one of its recensions is the Old English Heptateuch,\(^{94}\) parts of which are attributable to Ælfric\(^ {95}\) and which was mentioned briefly in chapter 4 above. While the work survives in six manuscripts, only MS BL Cotton Claudius B. iv bears illustrations. In their facsimile edition of the Claudius manuscript, Dodwell and Clemoes note:

> It is clear that the set of illustrations for which our manuscript [BL Cotton Claudius B. iv] is our sole witness became associated with the Old English Hexateuch compilation only after the text had been in circulation for some time [...] it was probably not the manuscript in which text and illustrations were originally combined.\(^ {96}\)

As a biblical translation, requiring great fidelity to the text, it is unsurprising that the Heptateuch bears no additions calling attention to the drawings: however, the presence of the illustrations in one manuscript allows us to class it as a reading-text by analogy with *Wonders of the East*. Both these items contain visual features which would, by definition, be redundant to the solely aural audience; neither requires the illustrations for the full comprehension of the text. While private reading would be the optimal means of approach to the works, their public or group reading would at least have been possible.\(^ {97}\) Thus, if we may assume that the recensions of the Heptateuch which lack illustrations were intended for the same style of reception as that of the copy contained in MS BL Cotton Claudius B. iv, and hence that the Old English Gospels,\(^ {98}\) apocrypha\(^ {99}\) and Alfred's translation of the first fifty psalms of the Psalter\(^ {100}\) had a similar design, then we may group the biblical works with *Wonders of the East* and the Alfredian translations as reading-texts, having a primary use for private reading but a possibility for use as group texts.

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\(^{96}\) Clemoes and Dodwell, *Hexateuch*, pp. 53 and 57.

\(^{97}\) In discussing manuscript illustration, I refer specifically to drawings rather than to illuminations and decorated capitals. While it seems possible that the interpretation of the implications of drawings advanced here also applies to illuminations, albeit in a weakened form, the logistical difficulties of determining which manuscripts have decorated initials, as well as the problem of determining what degree of illumination may be seen as significant, forbids their inclusion here.

\(^{98}\) Plan B.8.4.

\(^{99}\) Plan B.8.5.

\(^{100}\) Plan B.8.2.
Having now examined the few remaining narrative prose texts which contain marginal indications of their intended manner of approach, we may turn to the vernacular dialogues before examining the Old English poetry in the next chapter. We begin with *Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, an Ælfrician translation of a work of Alcuin which survives in seven manuscripts.\(^{101}\) Like the Alfredian *Soliloquies* and *Boethius* the work is prefaced by some seventeen lines which identify the speakers as Sigewulf and Alcuin and explain how the dialogue arose;\(^{102}\) following this, the first statement in the dialogue is presented as indirect speech, *þa cwæð albinus him to andswære þæt [...]*, the second is prefaced with 'Sigewulf hine befran æþrumæ þisu wordu' and the third with 'Albinus him answyrd'\(^{103}\) before reverting, like the *Soliloquies*, to the direct speech of the Latin original. The absence of addresses renders us unable to class the work other than as a 'reading-text'; within this class, we may group it specifically with the Alfredian translations, in that the translation seems to have rendered the work marginally more suitable for oral delivery than its source, although there is no strong evidence for such an intention.

It will be remembered that in our discussion of the 'Penitential of Pseudo-Ecgberht' in chapter 4 above we remarked on its similarity to *Interrogationes Sigewulfi*: both begin with a narrative preface explaining the circumstances under which the dialogue occurred or would occur, and use reported speech and phrases identifying the speakers at the beginning of the works before using direct speech. This description characterises not only these two texts, the *Soliloquies* of St. Augustine and the Old English *Boethius*, but also the prose dialogues *Solomon and Saturn* and *Adrian and Ritheus*,\(^{104}\) the former of which opens with 'þær kil þu saturnus and Saloman fœtode ymbe heora wisdom. *þa cwæð saturnus to salomane', and the latter merely with 'Adrianus cwæð to Ritheus'.\(^{105}\) However, the last five texts differ from the 'Penitential of Pseudo-Ecgberht' in that the participants in their dialogues are named, while in the 'Penitential' one of the speakers is the implied reader of the text at an unspecified future period: thus, while the relevant passage in the 'Penitential' would ultimately have been received aurally and was specifically composed for such a purpose - or at least, to provide a paradigm for a verbal event - we have no comparable information for the dialogues. It is certain that the oral delivery of the works would have required a performative aspect, since only by such means could the identity of the speakers, as


\(^{102}\) Ibid., p. 2. MS CCCC 178 has a second preface, a letter in Latin from Alcuin to Sigewulf: this is printed in ibid., p. 1.

\(^{103}\) Ibid., pp. 2, ibid. and 3 respectively.

\(^{104}\) *Plan B.5.1* and B.5.2, both ed. by Cross and Thomas Hill, *The 'Prose Solomon and Saturn' and 'Adrian and Ritheus': Edited from the British Library Manuscripts, with Commentary*, McMaster Old English Studies and Texts 1 (Toronto: UTP, 1982).

\(^{105}\) Ibid., pp. 25 and 35.
well as the very nature of the text as dialogue, have been manifested to an aural audience: while we lack sufficient evidence to exclude with complete certainty the possibility of such oral delivery for the works, this use seems unlikely. The likelihood of private reading having been the intended manner of approach is increased by the presentation of Adrian and Ritheus in MS BL Cotton Julius A. II, where the words of each speaker begin a new line in the manuscript and the opening word of each line contains a large initial of a contrasting colour to the previous and subsequent initials. In reading the text, there can be no confusion regarding the identity of each speaker in the discourse; in hearing the text, some uncertainty would seem likely. However, since the prose Solomon and Saturn in MS BL Cotton Vitellius A. XV lacks such a presentation, the internal information of these texts enables us merely to class them as 'reading-texts', or specifically as reading-texts which are far closer to the 'texts for private reading' edge of the spectrum than are, for example, the saints' Lives: however, further evidence may be derived by analogy with the Distichs of Cato,106 to which we may now turn.

The Old English Distichs of Cato in MS BL Cotton Julius A. II are presented in the same style as Adrian and Ritheus, the mathematical notes which separate them and the prayer which precedes Adrian and Ritheus. The Distichs, which consist of 'eighty-nine apophthegms and other gnomic pieces, most of which are based on the collection of Latin apophthegms called the Disticha Catonis',107 address their audience exclusively by the second person singular in a manner which frequently resembles that of the mathematical notes: 'gif þu þonne þæt gemet habban wille [...] , 'gif þu wille godne hlisan habban' and 'gif þu wylle hal beon'.108 While the importance of this is diminished by the fact that the Latin original also uses the second person singular, it is worth remarking that one of its apophthegms uses the third person plural, which was transformed into the second person singular for the Old English version.109 In any case the fragmentary and discontinuous nature of the work points towards private reading, a suggestion supported by the presentation of the text in the incomplete copy of the Distichs in MS BL Cotton Julius A. II and the by nature of the works with which it occurs, which strongly indicate private reading as the intended style of reception of the work. However, the Distichs of Cato also had 'for over a thousand years [...] an important place in elementary education'110 and survives in several Anglo-Saxon

108 Ibid., pp. 15, 12 and ibid. respectively.
109 Ibid., p. 36.
manuscripts in Latin:111 in the best surviving copy of the Old English version, MS Cambridge, Trinity College R. 9. 17, it follows an abbreviated copy of Ælfric's Grammar,112 a work which, like his Latin Colloquy,113 was designed for teaching purposes. While it is thus possible that the Grammar could have been read out as a dictation-exercise to the students, such a form of reception cannot be described as being through oral delivery, as we have defined it: further, while the Colloquy, like the 'Penitential of Pseudo-Ecgberht', may be a representation of, rather than a paradigm for, a spoken event, it cannot be seen as a form of sermon. In our current poor understanding of Anglo-Saxon educational practices,114 therefore, it would be wise to regard educational texts as a subdivision of the group of texts intended for private reading, and thus to class Ælfric's Grammar and the Distichs of Cato as texts for private reading.

The third version of the Distichs of Cato survives in MS BL Cotton Vespasian D. XIV, which also contains the remaining Old English dialogue: two translated chapters of the Elucidarium of Honorius.115 The Elucidarium is a 'very close translation' from its original116 and lacks the regular structure of the vernacular works Adrian and Rithesus and Solomon and Saturn, which regularly open each exchange with 'Sage me [...] ic þe sege', echoing the 'dic mihi' form.117 Further, unlike the other dialogues which we have examined, it bears no opening section which identifies either the speakers or the circumstances under which the dialogue took place and, again unlike the copies of the other short vernacular dialogues which are written by the same scribe as the surrounding texts, the Elucidarium is in 'a hand differing from the preceding as well as the following'.118 Whether or not we may infer from this that the text was merely

111 These MSS are listed in Cox, 'Dicts', p. 3.
112 Plan B.1.9.1.
113 The vernacular translation of this text, Plan C.3, is an interlinear gloss which, by definition, could not be used for oral delivery and need not be discussed in detail.
116 Föster, 'Two Notes', p. 90.
118 Föster, 'Two Notes', p. 89. Catalogue, p. 277, states that it is the second part of the Elucidarium and the following passage on the Lord's Prayer, rather than the two sections of the Elucidarium, which are in a different hand: this does not materially affect our arguments.
intended to fill a space in the manuscript, it is clear from its nature and from its lack of cohesion and of structure that it could only have been approached meaningfully through private reading. Thus, it may not be coincidental that the *Elucidarium* follows a series of mathematical notes, which could not have been used for oral delivery: indeed, it may well be that the manuscript, which is essentially 'a collection of theological pieces',\(^{119}\) was intended only for reference and for private reading.\(^{120}\) Certainly nine of its fifty items, according to Rubie Warner's division of the text,\(^{121}\) are fragments of fourteen lines or fewer in print, while few of its texts which address their audience by the second person plural are complete or suitable for oral delivery, being fragments of, or excerpts from, other works. Such works could not in their incomplete forms have been used for oral delivery, and may therefore be termed texts for private reading: and with the contents of *MS BL Cotton Vespasian D. XIV* we have exhausted the corpus of Old English prose.

Having now completed our examination of the surviving Anglo-Saxon vernacular prose, we may summarise our conclusions. As we have seen, the varieties of reception of Old English prose may be understood as a spectrum, ranging from texts which could not meaningfully have been receivedaurally at the one extreme, to the near-opposite: texts which would have lost much of their meaning and impact through private and solitary reading. (The true opposite of private reading, texts which could not meaningfully have been received visually, cannot be discussed with any validity, for the reasons adduced in the introduction above). The first case, that of private reading, was discussed in chapter 2: to this category we may assign medical, botanical, calendrical, computistical and mathematical works, as well as glosses and texts which occur in fragmentary or discontinuous form, such as king-lists. Further, works which contain drawings, illustrations and non-verbal additions such as numbered sections or other visual encodings necessary to the full understanding of the text may also be termed 'texts for private reading', as may educational texts, since the particular form of reception which they employ, such as through dictation or memorisation, may be understood most accurately as a form of private reading, rather than as a style of oral delivery: such a use is as text-based and as text-dependent as private reading.

Closely adjacent to this category may be placed liturgical pieces such as prayers and creeds, as well as magical items such as charms and chants. While the texts would

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\(^{119}\) *Catalogue*, p. 271.

\(^{120}\) Rima Handley suggests that 'the book may have been intended as a teaching manual for young religious' ('British Museum MS Cotton Vespasian D. xiv', *N&Q*, 219 (1974), 243-50 (p. 247)). However, the book seems more easily understandable as a collection of works for private and meditative reading.

\(^{121}\) *Catalogue*, pp. 271-77, divides the text into fifty-three sections and Förster into forty-eight ('Der Inhalt der altenglischen Handschrift Vespasianus D. XIV', *ESm*, 54 (1920), 46-68): these differences of division are not significant for these purposes.
have been approached by individuals, as we have seen the prayers and charms become effective only in speech and many would not have been spoken only by individuals, since the frequent use of the plural indicates that they were intended for group usage. The element of oral delivery in the use of these texts, therefore, prevents our understanding them as equal in terms of their reception to the preceding texts.

Thirdly, moving closer to the oral-delivery end of the spectrum, we may place the dialogues. As we have seen, these works contain a visual element in some of their recensions and oral delivery would have required a performative element to ensure the audience's full understanding of the work: however, the illustrations may be omitted without loss of understanding and solely aural reception is a theoretically possible manner of approach to the texts, although probably not the style intended or expected by the authors, translators or compilers. Here we may also class Wonders of the East, the Distichs of Cato and the several versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the discontinuous nature of which implies an intended approach of private reading but which could conceivably have been used for oral delivery, especially the lengthier entries.

Next to these we may fourthly class the Alfredian translations of St. Augustine's Soliloquies, Gregory's Dialogues and Pastoral Care, the Old English Bede, Orosius and Boethius, works which seem more likely than the biblical texts to have been used for oral delivery but which would more easily and efficiently have been approached through private reading. However, the modifications from the Latin originals which these works contain do indicate that the possibility of solely aural reception was envisaged by their translators: thus, these works lie precisely at the medial point of our spectrum of reception.

Next to these we may fifthly place the saints' Lives, which were certainly read aloud to listening groups as well as read privately by individuals: the frequency of the former use enables us to understand these works as being closer to the sermon extreme of the spectrum of reception than are the Alfredian translations, since their authors and translators most probably envisaged oral delivery as being of at least equal importance to private reading in the reception of the works. To these we may add other devotional works, such as the Vision of Leofric, the Vindicta Salvatoris and the Life of Machutus.

The sixth class of texts in our spectrum is the 'verbatim sermon'. This group comprises all those which, while addressing their audience in the plural, refer to themselves as texts, in phrases such as 'jis gewrit': these include Ælfric's Judith, 'St. Mark', 'St. Maur' and 'St. Edmund', the Blickling texts 'Birth of John the Baptist' and 'Assumption of the Virgin Mary' and Vercelli IX: these works were clearly intended for oral delivery, but in a very text-dependent manner. Thus these items, which also include the pastoral letters, differ from our seventh and final group, the sermon proper,
which does not refer to itself as a text and which could have been delivered by the priest after he had familiarised himself with the work: these include most items from Ælfric's first series of Catholic Homilies, the remaining Blickling and Vercelli sermons and, with the possible exception of the 'Sermo Lupi', the sermons of Wulfstan.

The Old English vernacular prose texts may thus be classed according to the manner in which they were intended to be approached in seven categories or, if we were to divide the 'private reading' class into the ruminatio- and non-ruminatio-styles, eight. It must be remembered that only such texts as calendars conform absolutely to one class: as we have seen, many works would serve - and, it would seem, were designed for - more than one approach. However, it is possible to deduce which use was the chief intention of the author in some cases, and as we have seen for the Second Series of the Catholic Homilies, subsidiary intentions may also be discerned. This has not been possible in every case, however, and it is for this reason that, apart from certain 'private reading' texts, the positioning of works on the spectrum is relative rather than absolute. We cannot determine exactly how, for example, the Vision of St. Paul was intended to be approached, but we can state that it is less likely than the Enchiridion, and more likely than Ælfric's 'Ash Wednesday', to have been intended for private reading. Therefore, we may class it with the saints' Lives and, by this method, it is possible to construct a relative ordering for the texts.

The primary data which have enabled us to construct this hierarchy of texts are chiefly to be found in the Anglo-Saxon vernacular prose: it is for this reason that it has formed the focus of these chapters. Having both refined and tested our methods and criteria, however, we now have a sufficiently detailed structure so to classify the Old English poetry, as well as by analogy to and by contrast with our understanding of the prose works. It is to the poetry, therefore, that we may now turn in our final chapter.
Having now examined the majority of Anglo-Saxon vernacular prose texts, we may conclude our discussion of the reception of literature in Old English by turning to the poetic corpus. Before examining the texts themselves, however, it should again be stated that it is the scholarly consensus regarding the division of the vernacular literature into prose and verse and the relative paucity of addresses to the audience in the latter which have necessitated our leaving this group until last: we are not treating the poetry separately because it is poetry, but because of the greater suitability of many prose texts for our analysis. Several of the texts which we examine in this chapter could have formed part of our earlier discussions: for example, the metrical charms were briefly discussed in chapter 2, while the verse saints' Lives and biblical narratives could have been examined with the nonsermons in chapter 4 above. It is for ease of argument and from deference to tradition that we shall examine these texts together, therefore, since there are no similarities of intended manner of reception which the poetic texts have as a body.

While the poetry will be approached according to the paradigms which we have now established from the prose texts, there is one crucial feature exhibited by certain poems which was of only minor relevance to the prose: the distinction between work and text, affecting the portrayal, as well as the role, of the narrator. It will be remembered that in certain sermons the priest who was to deliver the sermon to his congregation presented the words as if they were his own, identifying himself with the ic-person of his text. Thus, it is possible precisely to describe those sermons as works which were intended to be heard by a group, but texts which were intended to be read and perhaps memorised by an individual. A similar use of the first person singular was apparent in the charms, where we noted:

Since the charms address bees and clods as well as humans, the term 'audience' can only apply in its widest and loosest sense. The fact that the audience was human in 'wip færstice' is therefore coincidental, having no bearing on the circumstances in

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1 Roland Barthes's distinctive use of these terms, followed by Michel Foucault, forces us to define our use of them here (Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1972; 1st pub. *L'Archéologie du Savoir*, Paris: Gallimard, 1969), (p. 23)). By 'work', we mean the literary creation and by 'text' that creation in its written form. A poem surviving in identical, multiple copies could thus be described as several texts but one work.

2 Cf. ch. 3 above.
which the charm, in its written form, was intended to be approached.\footnote{3}

The audience of the charms is thus frequently inanimate and of little relevance for determining the reception of the work. As for the sermons, however, it is possible to infer that the texts were intended for private reception from the presentation of their speakers in the first person singular: the speaker of the charms identifies himself with the \textit{ic}-person and speaks the words as if they were his own. This feature alone enables us to class the charms as texts intended for private reception, even without the evidence of the adjoining directions for the charms' use which generally address their audience by the second person singular pronoun or by the singular imperative.

In these cases, the key to the use of the texts thus lies not in their characterisation of the audience but in their references to their speakers or narrators: the speaker of the work, rather than the addressee, is the implied reader of the text. In the sermons, the addresses to the listening audience - strictly, the audience of the lector rather than of the text - enable us to infer a public use of the text: in the charms, however, where the addressed audience need not even be human, we can have no guarantee from the textual evidence that the charm was not intended to be used in the presence of a listening group. The content of the charms may frequently render this unlikely: however, we are forced only to suppose and not to assert that the reader of the text had no listening audience, a possibility to which the charms themselves, naturally, do not testify.

In our examination of the poetic texts, therefore, we cannot assume in all cases that the narrator of the poem is addressing his audience: it may be that the reader of the text is intended to identify with, and hence to become, the narrator of the work, so that the possibility of the reader himself having an audience must be deduced from the nature, rather than from the form, of the poem. In order to demonstrate this we may return to the metrical charms and to the vernacular prayers which are classed as poetry in the \textit{Plan} since these texts, while easily classifiable according to our existing paradigms, most clearly manifest the distinction between prose and work and the specific use of the technique of narrator-as-reader.

As we have seen, while the majority of the metrical charms contain prose instructions for their use,\footnote{4} all of which address their reader by the second person singular pronoun or by the singular imperative,\footnote{5} two lack such instructions. While we have classed 'A Journey Charm' and 'Against a Wen'\footnote{6} as texts for private reading by

\footnote{3} Cf. ch. 2 above.
\footnote{5} One text, 'For a Delayed Birth', \textit{Plan} A.43.6, uses only the third person singular; however, this is most easily understood as a reflection of the compiler's expectation of male readership.
\footnote{6} \textit{Plan} A.43.11 and A.43.12.
analogy to their prose or prose-containing counterparts, through its references to its
speaker we may now confirm our classification of the first of these, which opens:

1c me on þisse gyrde beluce and on godes helde bebeode
wið þane sara stice, wið þane sara siege [...].7

Here, the efficacy of the charm depends on its speaker using the words as if they were
his own: he addresses God and asks for His protection in the course of his journey.
The addressed audience is therefore God rather than the reader, who is to become the
ic-person of the charm at the time of its use. We cannot assume that the reader would
have had no audience: however, since the plea is for the protection of an individual
rather than for a travelling group, it would seem reasonable to suppose that the charm,
as well as the text, was intended for private use. This data is lacking for 'Against a
Wen', which opens:

Wenne, wenne, wenchichenne,
her ne scealt þu timbrien, ne nenne tun habben [...].8

Here, there is no identified speaker: the work addresses the wen without referring to
the person who was intended to say the charm. While the content of the work and its
similarities to the other charms strongly implies individual usage, we cannot establish
from the charm itself that it was not intended to be chanted by a group: however, the
argument by analogy is sufficiently strong for us to regard it as a text for private
reception.

The possibility of group recitation is particularly relevant for our understanding of
the vernacular prayers.9 While many Anglo-Saxon vernacular prayers are not distinct
(in terms relevant to our discussion) from modern English prayers,10 we may examine
two of these: The Kentish Hymn and A Prayer.11 The first contains the passage:

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7 'Journey Charm' II. 1-2; Dobbie, Minor Poems, p. 126.
8 'Against a Wen' II. 1-2; Dobbie, Minor Poems, p. 128.
9 While the Lord's Prayer II differs enough in style, length and subject matter to warrant our
   considering it an independent poem from its namesake in the Office (Greenfield, A Critical History of
   Old English Literature (London: University of London Press, 1966), p. 175), this and the other Lord's
   Prayer texts are still essentially prayers which do not require our discussion.
10 These texts are Plan nos. A.21-23, ed. Dobbie, Minor Poems, pp. 74-80. Other texts in this
category include Fragments of Psalms, Psalm 50 and The Gloria II, Plan nos. A.24, A.26 and A.27
respectively, all in Dobbie, Minor Poems. Their authorship and intention are discussed by L.
Whitbread, The Old English Poems of the Benedictine Office and Some Related Questions, Anglia, 80
(1962), 37-49. It will be remembered that we alluded to the prayers in chapter 4 above: then as now,
the reception of these texts presents little difficulty for us. As with the legal materials, we examine
them not for themselves but for the light which they shed on other, less easily understood works.
11 Plan nos. A.25 and A.28 respectively; Dobbie, Minor Poems, pp. 87-88 and 94-96.
We Þe heriðg halgum stefnum
and þe blaetsea ð, bilewit feder,
and Þe þacija ð, þiða walden [...].

We have observed in our examination of the metrical charms that an intention for solitary reception is indicated by the use of the first person singular: here, we instead find only the first person plural. We may deduce from this that the prayer would have been suitable for group usage: however, such would be a particular style of group usage which would not be akin to that for other 'group texts' which we have identified. We may suppose that when the *Kentish Hymn* was read from the manuscript, whether in church or elsewhere, others could have been present who recited the text from memory, in the manner which we have postulated for 'Against a Wen'. Whether the reading of the prayer as an accompaniment to its recitation was itself a part of the process of prayer, or whether the written text was useful only until it had been committed to memory, remains a debatable point; in any case, the *Kentish Hymn* may be understood as a work intended for a group. The same cannot be deduced for *A Prayer*, which opens:

ÆLa, drihten leof!  ÆLa, dema god!
Geara me.  ece waldend.
Ic wat mine saule  synnum forwundod;
gehæl þu hy,  heofena drihten [...].

Based upon this characterisation of the speaker as a solitary individual, we may infer that *A Prayer* was intended for private and devotional reading and recitation by an individual rather than by a member of a group, as was *The Kentish Hymn*. It will be

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12 *Kentish Hymn*, ll. 7-9.
13 An implication of this may be found in Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, ch. 88, in which Asser describes the contents of Alfred's handbook, such as 'the day-time offices and some psalms and certain prayers which he had learnt in his youth' (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred*, p. 99). It is noteworthy that the book contains things which Alfred already knew by heart and for which he therefore had no need in informational terms.
14 Cf. our discussion of the charms in ch. 2 above, where we showed that the text was certainly not present at the time of certain charms' use; cf. also Greenfield, *Critical History*, pp. 195-96.
15 This argument also applies to Cædmon's *Hymn* (Plan A.32.1 and A.32.2; ed. Dobbie, *Minor Poems*, pp. 105-06), which uses the first person plural: however, the fact that it survives, exceptionally, in multiple copies discourages our using manuscript evidence. In any case, it would seem likely that much of the reason for its preservation might be its history rather than its use.
17 The few uses of the first person plural apply in their most general senses, to all humanity: cf. ibid., ll. 30-33.
18 Some Latin members of the 'significant body of private devotional prayers written in Anglo-Saxon England' are discussed by Thomas H. Bestul in 'St Anselm and the Continuity of Anglo-Saxon Devotional Traditions', *An Med*, 18 (1977), 20-41 (p. 20) and idem., 'St. Anselm, The Monastic
noted that here, as in the case of the metrical charms, the speaker of the work is the reader of the text, or for group prayers one of the reciters, while the audience of the work is not the reader, but God. We cannot, therefore, speak with any validity of the audience of the text, which is an invalid concept; rather, we should have to re-formulate that as the audience of the reader, the presence of which naturally would not be indicated by the text itself.

While we have used our discussion of the prayers and charms to illustrate the distinction between work and text and the differences of audience which each may have, we do not imply that the distinction is relevant in all cases. As we stated in the introductory paragraph to this chapter, the poetry is in general suitable for analysis according to the techniques and the paradigms which we established from prose texts, whereby the audience identifies with or is represented by the second person pronouns: a contention which we may now substantiate.

We may begin with the *Menologium*, one of the two Old English poems bearing addresses to its audience solely by the second person plural; despite this, it would seem most likely that the text was intended to be received visually and, like the *Enchiridion*, attempts to address the numerous solitary readers envisaged by its author. This feature provides supporting evidence for the speculation that Byrhtferth was the author of both works, and the link between the *Menologium* and the *Enchiridion* is strengthened by their contents: each seeks to provide and to preserve information for its readers and while neither can be described as a reference-book, a term which we have reserved for texts composed of discrete sections such as the Leechbooks, they may be termed information-texts. Indeed, the address to the audience in the *Menologium* draws attention to this very capacity:

 Nu ge findan magon
 haligra tilda  þe man healdan sceal [...].


19 *Plan* A.14; Dobbie, *Minor Poems*, pp. 49-55. As Lapidge argues (The Saintly Life in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 243-63 (pp. 249-50 and pp. 262-63)), the text is better termed *The Old English Metrical Calendar*; however, we here use the name under which it 'normally passes' (ibid., p. 262).

20 The other poem containing addresses in the second person plural is *The Phoenix*, which is discussed below; the 'metrical prefaces' which so address their readers were cited in the introduction above.

21 Lapidge, (ibid., p. 248), describes the author as a 'poet at Ramsey' writing a century after 'the early years of the tenth century'; in an unpublished article, however, C. R. Hart identified the author with Byrhtferth. I am grateful to Michael Lapidge for this reference.

Further, *Seasons for Fasting*,23 which parallels the *Menologium* in its structure of versified calendar, addresses its audience by the second person singular pronoun:

\[
\text{Gif } \text{ðe } \text{ þonne } \text{ secgan } \text{ suþan } \text{ cymene}
\]
\[
\text{bryttan } \text{ Franga, } \text{ þæt } \text{ þu } \text{ gebann } \text{ sceole}
\]
\[
\text{her } \text{ on } \text{ æorþan } \text{ ænig } \text{ healdan } [...].24
\]

These addresses, the content and purposes of the texts and their parallels to the *Enchiridion*, the calendrical notes and to the thirty-two line menologium in MS CCCC 422 which we examined in chapter 2 above, point strongly towards solitary and visual reception as the most likely manner in which the *Menologium* and *Seasons for Fasting* would have been approached by their Anglo-Saxon audience. In neither case has the narratorial presence relevance for our purposes, since it alternates between the first person singular and the first person plural in contexts which can only be understood authorially: instead, their direct references to the audience enable us to examine the texts by the methods which we have discussed for the prose, for which the distinction between work and text is largely irrelevant. Further, while the content and purpose of the texts are not in themselves sufficient criteria for determining the intended manner of reception, it is noteworthy that many other Old English poems which directly address their audience by the second person singular, to which we now turn, may also be described as information-texts.

*Instructions for Christians*25 contains numerous addresses to its audience in the form of 'metrical apophthegms, moral and religious'.26 Since the narrator of the poem, identified by the first person singular, frequently addresses his audience by the second person singular pronoun, we may regard the text as one intended for private reading: of some interest are the closing lines, connecting the audience to the narrator in the first person plural:

\[
\text{Vndergyte } \text{ðu } \text{ pis } \text{ geornlice } \text{ æfre}
\]
\[
\text{þæt } \text{ sigefæste } \text{ weogas } \text{ syndon } \text{ ealle } \text{ þreo}
\]
\[
\text{heonan } \text{ to } \text{ heofonum } [...]
\]
\[
\text{Gefylste } \text{ us, } \text{ filius } \text{ dei,}
\]

---

24 *Seasons for Fasting* II. 87-90; ibid., p. 100.
25 *Plan* A.44; ed. by Rosier, 'Instructions for Christians: A Poem in Old English', *Anglia*, 82 (1964), 4-22.
We may therefore regard the text as an address to its reader, to be read prayerfully by an individual identifying himself with the *þu*-person, in which the reader and the narrator - and possibly all men - are joined in the uniting prayer of the closing lines. Based upon this, the two addresses to the audience by the second person plural pronoun may most plausibly be understood as a reflection of the author's awareness that more than one individual was likely to read his text, since the *þu*-address is far too frequent to be understood as enallage and would be nonsensical in the context of oral delivery to a group:

Syndon eac swa some ðær feower
þære woruldinga, þæt ge witan màeg
man fram deofla and beon metodes þeing.[…]
Ne scylen ge þæs wenan þeah ic þisne wordcwide
æfter Dauðe dihtum sette […]28

*Instructions for Christians* is thus a text intended for private reading; as we have noted, this is supported by the fact that the majority of poems in Old English which bear direct addresses to their audiences in the second person singular are, like *Instructions for Christians*, poems in which the narrator gives advice through apophthegms or maxims. Thus, the narrator of *Vainglory*29 describes the characteristics of an arrogant and envious man and comments 'nu þu cunnan meaht / gif þu þyslicne / þegn gemittest […]',30 addressing the reader directly. Similarly, *Maxims I* opens:31

Fringe mec frodum wordum! Ne læt þinne ferð onhælne,
degol þæt þu deopost cunne! Nelle ic þe min dyrne gesecgan,
gif þu me þinne hygécraeft hlyest ond þine heortan garþtas.32

Further, *Homiletic Fragment II*33 opens with 'gefeoh nu on ferðe / ond to frofre geþeoh / dryhtne þinum / ond þinne dom arær',34 while *Judgement Day*35 prefaces

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27 Ibid., II. 256-58 and 263-64; Rosier, ibid., p. 18.
28 Ibid., II. 10-13 and 117-18; Rosier, ibid., pp. 12 and 14.
30 *Vainglory* II. 44-45; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, p. 148. Cf also II. 77-78, where the audience is again addressed by the second person singular.
32 *Maxims I* II. 1-3; ibid., p. 156.
34 Ibid., I. 1.
its final statement with 'oncweƿ nu ƿisne cwide', implying individual reception in its imperative. Here, the ending is clearly intended to be spoken aloud, as the 'oncweƿ' indicates: unlike Instructions for Christians, however, there is no link between the narrator and the reader. Rather than praying for himself and for others, the reader is charged to resolve his mind and to become aware of his limitations:

```
cup sceal geweorpan
þæt ic gewægan ne mæg wyrd under heofonum [...].37
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While Vainglory and Judgement Day I were clearly intended to be read prayerfully by individuals, therefore, the same cannot be assumed for the fragment, although such is the only possible manner for its approach in its surviving form:38 the text from which it derives may rather have been akin to Exhortation to Christian Living39 and A Summons to Prayer.40 While both these texts address their audience by the second person singular, it is clear from their content that they were intended to be delivered orally to an individual and thus most nearly resemble 'Address to an Individual', which was discussed in chapter 4 above.41 Such an intended use is clear from A Summons to Prayer, which opens:

```
þænne gemiltsaƿ þe, N. mundum qui regit,
þeoda þrymcyninge thronum sedentem
a butan ende [...].42
```

The use of an initial to mark the name of the addressee would be nonsensical whether received aurally or visually, being dependent on supplementary information to be provided by the lector transmitting the text, and thus indicates that the work was intended to be spoken by a monk or priest to an individual in his spiritual charge. This intended use is echoed by the opening line of Exhortation, 'nu lære ic þe / swa man

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36 Ibid., l. 114; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 215.
38 The same is true for The Grave, Plan A.47, ed. by Schröer, 'The Grave', Anglia, 5 (1882), 289-90, which uses the second person singular address; however, it is possible that it represents a speech of the soul to the body extracted from a longer text, the reception of which need not have been private. Cf. R. Buchholz, ed., Die Fragmenten der Reden der Seele an den Leichen, Erlanger Beiträge zur englischen Philologie 2 (Erlangen: Deichert, 1890), and our discussion of the 'Soul and Body' texts below.
39 Plan A.18; Dobbie, Minor Poems, pp. 67-69.
40 Plan A.19; Dobbie, Minor Poems, pp. 69-70.
41 This view is supported by Whitbread in his 'Notes on Two Minor Old English Poems', Studia Neophilologica, 29 (1957), 123-29. While Whitbread would also class Judgement Day II in this group, as we discuss below in our examination of that poem the grounds for such an argument seem weak and its conclusion unnecessary.
42 Summons to Prayer ll. 1-3; Dobbie, Minor Poems, p. 69.
leofnæ sceal', and may also have been the intended approach to the original text of *Homiletic Fragment II*. Again, we may observe that the mere fact of these texts being 'poetic' rather than prose is not in itself relevant for these purposes.

In *Exhortation to Christian Living* and *A Summons to Prayer*, and possibly in *Homiletic Fragment II*, the reader or deliverer of the text is intended to identify with the ic-person while the audience of the work is indicated by the þu-person: these texts clearly demonstrate the importance of the difference between the audiences of the text and of the work, as well as providing incontrovertible evidence that some Anglo-Saxon poetry was intended for oral delivery and aural reception. While these three texts necessitate the rare style of individual yet aural reception, *The Phoenix* was clearly intended for the more common style of aural reception by a listening group.

*The Phoenix* contains a narratorial voice, opening 'hwæt ic gefrugnen', and addresses its audience by the first person plural:

Ne wene þæs ænig aelda cynnes
þæt ic lygewordum leōs somnige,
write wōðcæfte. Gehyrāð witedom
Iobes gieddinga.47

This address to the audience in the second person plural, unaccompanied by any addresses in the singular, enables us to state with confidence that the author of *The Phoenix* expected a group to receive his text: further, the reference to writing enables us to state that the written text was present at the time of the group's aural reception of the work. We may therefore place *The Phoenix* with the pastoral letters as a text intended to be approached through verbatim delivery to a listening group.

In having identified texts which were approached through private reading and through oral delivery both to an individual and to a group, we have confirmed that the spectrum of styles of reception which was established in our discussion of prose texts also applies to the poetry. Following our discussion of the distinction between work

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44 The implication of dialogue in the opening line of *Maxims I* and the address in the second person singular could also be seen as implying oral delivery to an individual: however, it seems unnecessary to propose this specific and limited style of access to a work without extremely strong evidence, which in this case is not forthcoming.
46 *Phoenix* I. 1; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, p. 94.
and text and the contingent importance of the representation of the speaker rather than the references to the audience, we may now turn to the verse saints' Lives and to biblical poetry in order better to understand the mechanics through which the audience identifies with the speaker.

We may begin with Cynewulf's Juliana; a text which bears no addresses to its audience until the closing section, in which Cynewulf identifies himself and speaks of his spiritual needs. Later in this passage, we find the lines:

\begin{verbatim}
Bidde ic monna gehwone
gumena cynnes, þe þis gied wræce,
þæt he mec neodful bi noman minum
gemyne modig, [...].
\end{verbatim}

While the indications which Cynewulf's runic signature in this passage bear for the deduction of its intended manner of reception are minor, as we shall discuss below, the reference to the 'monna gehwone / gumena cynnes þe þis gied wræce' is significant and would be inappropriate in the context of oral delivery to a listening group, since it refers specifically to the reader of the text. Further, were the poem intended for group aural reception we should expect Cynewulf, who is seeking intercessory prayers, also to address the group audience and ask that they too should pray for him: he would not limit himself to the lector. As Robert Rice writes: 'the reader is invited, indeed implored, to take part in the penitential act of intercession for the poet's soul'. Of some importance is Cynewulf's use of the verb 'wrecan', 'to recite', which enables us more precisely to determine the intended approach to this text as well as to others.

It will be remembered that Ælfric referred to 'hwilc gelæræd man þas race oferræde, oððe rædan gehyre', writing that 'ic Ælfric munuc awende þas boc [...] þam mannon to rædenne þe þæt Leden ne cunnon'. As we have seen, 'rædan' could refer to silent and private reading as well as to declamation and does not indicate the manner in which the work was intended to be approached: 'wrecan', however, has the specific implication of speech. Cynewulf's choice of this word is revealing: the poem was clearly intended to be sounded rather than seen. Thus, the closing prayer is to be spoken by the reader, joining his voice to that of Cynewulf - and perhaps to that of all men - in the first person plural:

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48 Plan A.3.5; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, pp. 113-33.
49 Juliana, II. 718-721, Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 133.
51 Godden, p. 267 and Thorpe, II, p. 460; cf. ch. 3 above.
52 Godden, p. 2 and Thorpe, II, p. 2; cf. ch. 3 above.
In *Juliana*, then, the curious combination of clear indications for oral delivery and specific references to a solitary reader strongly implies that the work was intended to be delivered to a listening group, while the term 'wrecan' suggests that the poem was to be recited from memory rather than read aloud from the text. Cynewulf provides further evidence for this elsewhere, for *Elene* bears no references either to its audience or to its speaker until the closing passage, which also contains Cynewulf's signature: this passage follows the conclusion of the story of Elene and the word 'finit', while *The Fates of the Apostles*, which refers to the reader in the lines 'nu ic þonne bidde / beorn se ðe lufige / þysses giddes begang [...]56 and 'sie þæs gemyndig, / mann se ðe lufige / þisses galdres begang [...]',57 ends with a prayer which addresses the reader in the second person singular and which links the reader to Cynewulf:

[..] Nu þu cunnon miht
hwa on þam wordum wæs werum oncyðig. [...]  
Ah utu we þe geornor to gode cleopigan,
sendan usse bene on þa beorhtan gesceafþ,
þæt we þæs botles brucan motan
[..].  Nu a his lof standeþ,
mycel ond mare, ond his miht seomþ,
ee ond edgiong, ofer ealle gesceafþ. Finit.58

In order to reconcile the features of a speaker who is anonymous until the closing lines, who refers to his reader only in the final passage and who specifically describes vocal reading, we must suggest that these three Cynewulfian poems were intended to function both as oral works and as written texts. Each of these poems may be divided into two sections: a work which was intended to be received by a listening group, bearing no addresses to its audience, and an addendum, to which the addresses are

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54 This word 'explicitly calls attention to the completion of the poem' in *The Partridge*; cf. Greenfield, *Critical History*, p. 181.  
55 *Plan A*.2.2; Krapp, *Vercelli*, pp. 51-54.  
57 Ibid., ll. 107-08; Krapp, *Vercelli*, p. 54.  
58 Ibid., ll. 105-06 and 115-122; Krapp, *Vercelli*, p. 54.
confined, intended solely for the private reception of the lector. Only thus can the 'false endings' and the specific indications of otherwise contradictory manners of reception be resolved: and in postulating this as the intended approach - or strictly, combination of approaches - to the Cynewulf poems, we may discern further characteristics of poetic texts suitable for oral delivery.

Firstly, the narrator in the texts plays a minimal role in all three works, referring to himself by first person singular and plural pronouns interchangeably. Secondly, *Elene* and *Juliana* both make extensive use of direct speech: however, each speech is prefaced by clear statements that the following passage is not in the narratorial voice but in that of one of the characters in the narrative, who is named and whose mood, if not whose personality and actions, is copiously described. To take one example of dialogue from *Juliana*:

\[
\text{Da reorode rices hyrde} \\
\text{wif pære fæmnan fæder frecne mode,} \\
\text{daraðæbbende } "[...]" \\
\text{Geswearc } pære swiðferð sweor æfter worde, \\
\text{pære fæmnan fæder, ferðlocan onspoan: } "[...]" \\
\text{Eode } pære fromlice fæmnan to spræce, \\
\text{anred ond yræwweorg. yrre gebolgen,} \\
\text{pær he glædmode geonge wiste} \\
\text{wic weardian. He } pære worde cwæð: "[...]" \]

As we discussed with regard to the dialogue-texts in chapter 5 above, rapid changes of voice without the identification of the speakers would be difficult to convey orally and are an indicator of solitary and visual reception: here, however, there can be no confusion as to who is speaking. Such a feature is not strong evidence for oral delivery and for aural reception; however, where dialogue is present, it is a prerequisite for that receptional mode. Based upon this, we may state that while Pharaoh has an abrupt

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59 It will be remembered that Ælfric's 'Judith', among other texts, also confined its references to its audience to the closing section: the technique cannot be regarded as peculiar to Cynewulf. As a *gewrit 'Judith*', however, could only be approached in a text-dependent manner.

60 Excluding, of course, the final sections: we shall return to this below. Phrases such as 'we heard' or 'I shall tell' are not significant for these purposes.


exchange of dialogue and would therefore be intelligible only through visual reception, such texts as Andreas, Genesis, Exodus, Daniel, Christ and Satan, Guthlac, Azarias, Beowulf, Judith and The Battle of Maldon have potential for oral delivery and for aural reception. As in the cases of Apollonius of Tyre and the Life of St. Christopher, which we examined in chapter 5 above, we cannot demonstrate an intention for group reception, since none addresses its audience by the second person plural; however, neither can we demonstrate a necessity for visual reception, so that the possibility that these texts were intended to be heard rather than seen cannot be ignored.

The limited evidence which may be gleaned for the reception of these texts lies not in their addresses to their audiences but in the specific identification of their speakers and in the absence of descriptions of their narrators. For the lector fully to identify himself with the ic-person, the character who speaks through the first person singular must be devoid of personality: he must be nameless and have no personal history. 'In short, the oral poet = the reciter = the narrator = the text, all of which are perceived directly and on the same level by the audience.' Otherwise, the lector would be performing as part of his reading: he would be taking on another's character and speaking in a voice which could not be his own: 'one may stretch this argument even further and say that the fictitious 'I', be it narrative or lyrical, has no habitat outside the written text.' Thus, in the prayers the ic-person was an empty figure, enabling the reader to address God in what became his own words: similarly here, in the 'heroic poems', the narrator is little more than a device. As we saw in our discussion of the

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64 Plan A.2.1; Krapp, Vercelli, pp. 3-51.
65 Plan A.1.1; Krapp, Junius, pp. 1-87. The abrupt transitions between the two Genesis-poems and the inaccurate numbering of the sections, as well as the fragmentation of the texts, points against oral delivery in their surviving form: however, these problems were not intended by the poems' authors. Neither may the illustrations in the manuscript be seen as integral to the poems: for the role of illustrations and the limitations of their relevance for our purposes, see ch. 5 above.
66 Plan A.1.2-4 respectively; Krapp, Junius, pp. 90-158. For the possibility that the Junius poems are lectiones, texts intended for shared reading, see Geoffrey Shepherd, 'Scriptural Poetry', in Continuations and Beginnings, pp. 1-36 (pp. 9-10 and esp. pp. 22-35): his view is doubted by Gatch, 'Old English Literature and the Liturgy: Problems and Potential', ASE, 6 (1977), 237-47 (pp. 245-46).
67 Guthlac does contain one rapid exchange of dialogue, the dramatic interruption of Guthlac's deathbed speech by his servant, at ll. 1173-75; even here, the servant addresses Guthlac as 'lufan sibbe', indicating the change of voice.
68 Plan A.3.2-3 respectively; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, pp. 49-94.
69 Plan A.4.1; Dobbie, Beowulf and Judith. It is possible to overstate the significance of the narrator's single self-reference in the opening line for these purposes; the marginal numberings in Judith have no more significance for these purposes than in the Alfredian translations and in The Maccabees. The sheer quantity of Beowulf scholarship makes any reference to it here impractical.
70 Plan A.4.2; Dobbie, Beowulf and Judith.
71 Plan A.9; Dobbie, Minor Poems, pp. 7-16.
72 Bäuml, 'The Unmaking of the Hero', p. 90: we would dispute the term 'oral'.
74 Cf. in this regard Leo Spitzer, 'Note on the Poetic and the Empirical "I" in Medieval Authors', Traditio, 4 (1946), 414-22, who submits the theory that, in the Middle Ages, the 'poetic I' had more
dialogue-texts above and as we implied in our brief discussion of Pharoah, the abrupt interchanges which result from the use of direct speech without a narrator are strong evidence for private reception and enabled us to describe the prose Solomon and Saturn and Adrian and Ritheus, each of which lacked a narrator, as having been most probably, if not certainly, intended for visual reception.\footnote{Cf. ch. 5 above.} This argument is not valid for the poetic versions of Solomon and Saturn,\footnote{Plan A.13; ed. by R. J. Menner, The Poetical Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn, Modern Language Association of America Monograph Series 13 (New York, NY: Modern Language Association of America, 1941) and Dobbie, Minor Poems, pp. 31-48.} however, which must instead be categorised by our final criterion for determining the intended manner of reception, to which we now turn.

Although Robert Menner notes in his discussion of these texts that 'the two poems are both dialogues between Solomon, representing the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and Saturn, representing pagan wisdom',\footnote{Menner, Poetical Dialogues, p. 5.} each contains a third voice or narratorial presence. In Solomon and Saturn I the narratorial voice is confined to the phrases 'Saturnus cwæð' and 'Solomon cwæð', which introduce each section; in Solomon and Saturn II, however, the dialogue is also preceded by an opening section of some twenty lines, in which the occasion for the dialogue is explained:

\begin{verbatim}
Hwæt, ic flitan gefrægn on fyrdagum
    modgleawe men, middangeardes ræswan,
    gewesan ymbe hira wisdom.\footnote{Ibid., p. 90.}
\end{verbatim}

Thus, although Solomon and Saturn address each other by the second person singular, rather than the external reader or listeners, the narrative presence in each text enables us to class the poetic versions as 'reading-texts': it is not necessary to suppose on the basis of the dialogue structure that the poems could have been received only through private and visual reception. In Solomon and Saturn I, however, there is one feature which could only have been appreciated visually and which enables us to refine our classification to the more precise 'text intended for private reading': the presence of runes in the poem between lines 89 and 135. What is important for us is not simply the presence of the runes, however, but the way in which they are used, which we may now discuss.

As we noted above,\footnote{Cf. the introduction above.} it has been suggested that Cynewulf's runic signature in four poems is sufficient proof of his intention that the poems should be approached
visually as well as aurally, since the runes must be seen to be understood. However, this argument rests on certain assumptions for the prevalence of runes in Anglo-Saxon England and the familiarity of the presumed audience with them: specifically, it implies that the audience would recognise the runes only on sight and not by their names. The weakness of this argument is demonstrated by the closing lines of riddle 58, where a rune is named rather than written:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ pry sind in naman} \\
\text{ryhte runstafas, } \text{ para is Rad foran.}
\end{align*}
\]

Similarly, we might cite the use of Roman numerals in poetic texts as a key to the use of runes. In Elene, which we have demonstrated to have been intended for oral delivery, we find:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ongan } \text{a willægen } \text{æfter } \text{am wuldres treo,} \\
\text{elnes anhydīg, } \text{eorðan delfan} \\
\text{under tūrhwægan, } \text{hæt he on XX} \\
\text{fotmælum feor } \text{funde behelede} 
\end{align*}
\]

Here, the Roman numeral is meaningless in purely visual terms, since it represents the 'twentig' needed for the alliteration and must be sounded to be understood. When the names of runes are necessary for the alliteration or for the metre, therefore, they are no more indicative of visual reception than is the numeral in the example cited above. As Maureen Halsall writes:

In several of the versified riddles of The Exeter Book, runes often function in two ways: both as separate words that carry metrical stress and alliteration and as

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80 The poems containing his signature are The Fates of the Apostles (Plan A.2.2), Elene (Plan A.2.6), Christ II (Plan A.3.1) and Juliana (Plan A.3.5); according to Charles Kennedy, 'the runic letters catch the reader's eye' (Early English Christian Poetry: Translated into Alliterative Verse: With Critical Commentary (London: Hollis and Carter, 1952), p. 18).


82 The Exeter book riddles are assigned three numbers in the Plan: Plan A.3.22 for riddles 1-59, Plan A.3.31 for riddles 30b and 60 and Plan A.3.34 for riddles 61-95. Since we discuss the riddles individually below, it is not feasible to cite these listings for each riddle. The riddles are variously numbered: we here follow the ASPR divisions.

83 Riddle 58, II. 14-15; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 209.

84 Elene, ll. 827-30; Krapp, Verocti, p. 89. Cf. also Beowulf, I. 207, Dobbie, Beowulf and Judith, p. 9, where 'findan' alliterates with 'XVna sum'. The use of the Tironian sign for the syllable 'and' as well as for the independent word may also be adduced here.
letters which, taken together, spell out the words of the solution. Similarly, it is the method used in the runic signatures of the poet Cynewulf.85

As we observed in our discussion of the Heptateuch and of other illustrated works above, features which can only be appreciated visually are relevant to our understanding of the text's reception only if it is seriously diminished by their absence to the point of loss of comprehension: the fact that they may contain supplementary information is irrelevant. For these purposes, we must acknowledge that if a text could have been read aloud and received aurally, then not only might it have been so received but might it have been intended for that style of reception by its author. It is only when runes function solely as letters without metrical or semantic function that they may be interpreted as certain indicators of visual reception: the wider their range of functions, the less the receptional significance of the runes. Their presence indicates that Cynewulf and the anonymous authors of certain riddles and The Rune Poem were literate and may well have composed pen-in-hand:86 they do not necessitate such characteristics for their audience.

In the case of riddle 36, by contrast, we may state with certainty that the text was intended to be appreciated visually. Lines three to eight, following the Krapp-Dobbie presentation of the text, run:

Hæfde feowere    fet under wombe
ond ehtuwe
monn . h . w . M . wiif . m . x . l . kf wf . hors . qxxs .
  uf on hrycge;
  hæfde tu fiþru    ond twelf eagan
  ond siex heafdu.    Saga hwæt hio wære.87

We shall return to the phrase 'saga hwæt hio wære' shortly; for the moment, it is sufficient to note that the string of letters in the fifth line could not be read out without destroying the metre of the poem and would be still more unintelligible if approached aurally rather than visually. Our inference that riddle 36 was intended for visual reception is confirmed by the closing lines of the second part of the riddle, in which the audience is directly addressed by the second person singular: ðu wast, gif ðu const, / to gesecganne [...]'.88 This contrasts with the use of runes in The Rune Poem and in

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87 Riddle 36, ll. 3-8; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, p. 198.
88 Ibid., ll. 12-13.
Fates of the Apostles, where the phonetic values of the runes are necessary for the alliteration:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wen ne bruce} & \quad \text{be can weana lyt, [...]} \\
\text{Peor\# by\# symble} & \quad \text{plega and hlehter, [...]}^{89} \text{[Rune Poem]} \\
\text{[and]} & \quad \text{[...]}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{ponne cen ond yr} \quad \text{craeftes neos\# [...]}.^{90} \text{[Fates]}
\]

Similarly, in lines 89 to 138 of Solomon and Saturn I, the names of the runes are frequently necessary for the alliteration and metre: \(^{91}\) however, while the text in MS CCCC 41 only provides the roman letters, MS CCCC 422 uses the roman letters in conjunction with the runes. \(^{92}\) Since the runes and the roman letters could not both have been read out without serious disruption to the metre, and since the meaning of the names of the runes is irrelevant to the sense of the poem, it is apparent that they serve visual rather than aural functions and hence, that both poetic versions of Solomon and Saturn were intended for visual, private reception.

Our examination of the Solomon and Saturn poems has isolated our final criterion for determining the intended approach to an Anglo-Saxon vernacular text: the use of runes. Further, it has also supported our deductions concerning narratorial voice and interrogation, which may be reviewed briefly. As we have observed, the characters in the Solomon texts and in Adrian and Rithæus address each other, rather than their intended audience, by the second person singular: we may therefore regard the interrogatives in the texts as suitable for addressing one individual rather than a group, as in phrases such as 'sæge me' and 'saga hwæt ic mæne', \(^{93}\) or the more lengthy:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Saga } & \text{ðu me, Salomon cyning, sunu Dauides,} \\
\text{hwæt beo } & \text{ða feowere fægæs rapas?}^{94}
\end{align*}
\]

[and] Saga me hu fela ys fiscycnna on wætere [...] saga me hwilc man ærost mynster getimbrode.\(^{95}\)

89 The Rune Poem, II. 22 and 38; Dobbie, Minor Poems, pp. 28 and 29. The bold type represents the runic symbols, which cannot be reproduced here.
90 Fates of the Apostles, i. 103, Krapp, Vercelli, p. 54.
91 In Solomon and Saturn I and in The Rune Poem the names of the runes more commonly contribute only to double alliteration: our argument is still valid for those cases, albeit in a weakened form.
93 The fact that these recurrent phrases here form Bowran formulas necessitates our re-establishment of the significance of the singular form of the imperative in this context.
94 Menner, Poetical Dialogues, p. 96; Dobbie, Minor Poems, p. 43.
95 Cross and Hill, Solomon and Saturn, p. 33.
We may therefore state with confidence that the twenty-four Exeter book riddles which use the phrases 'saga hwæt ic hatte', 'frige hwæt ic hatte' or some variant thereof were intended for solitary reception. This is confirmed by the fact that three of those riddles also address their audience by the second person singular pronoun, the first of which, riddle 36, was cited above and the second and third of which close:

\begin{verbatim}
Gif þu mæge reselan recene gesecgan
soþum wordum, saga hwæt hio hatte. [riddle 39]
[and] Rece, gif þu cuinne,
wis worda gleaw, hwæt sio wihth sie. [riddle 32]
\end{verbatim}

Besides these texts, which number over a quarter of the Exeter book riddles, there are also four riddles which involve anagrams, the letters of which are written in runic rather than roman script. The two of these riddles which present the runes as non-metrical or unpronounceable strings, rather than linking them with connecting words as in riddles 24, 64, 91, the Cynewulfian texts and The Husband's Message, may plausibly if not certainly be classed as texts intended for private reading on those grounds.

While we have now classed twenty-six of the ninety-five riddles by the criteria of runic content and of direct addresses, the chief interest of this group of texts for our purposes lies in its variety of narratorial presentation. Thirty-three riddles use a first-person narrator, who describes a creature or event in elliptical terms which he in some cases then challenges his audience, addressed in the singular, to identify:

\begin{verbatim}
Ic wiht geseah on wege feran,
\end{verbatim}

96 The riddles containing the form 'saga hwæt ic hatte' or similar are: riddles 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 19, 23, 35, 36, 39, 62, 66, 73, 80, 83 and 86. Those containing 'frige hwæt ic hatte' are: riddles 14, 16, 26 and 27. Besides these, riddle 59 uses the phrase 'ræde se þe wille', riddle 61 'ræd hwæt ic mæne' and riddle 67 'sece se þe cuinne'. It is worthy of note that the collections of riddles in Latin with which the Old English riddles are usually compared, such as those of Tatwine, Aldhelm and Symphosius (all ed. by Fr. Glorie, Variæ Collectiones Aenigmatum Merovingicae aetatis, 2 vols, CCSL 133, 133a (Turnhout: Brepols, 1968)), have no equivalent to these phrases.

97 Riddle 39, ll. 28-29; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 200.
98 Riddle 32, ll. 13-14; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 197.
99 By contrast, of the 240 riddles attributed to Aldhelm, Symphosius and Tatwine, only ten make any reference to their audiences, all of which use the singular number or refer to 'readers'.
100 Riddles 19, 24, 64 and 75; riddle 91 contains one rune, and riddles 42 and 58 name rather than draw runes. One other riddle, riddle 23, contains an anagram; since the letters are in roman script and can be pronounced as an (albeit meaningless) word, however, there is no reason to assume visual reception as a prerequisite for solving the riddle.
101 Riddles 19 and 75.
102 As we saw above, riddles 42 and 58 use the names of runes as clues to their solutions: since these are written in roman script, however, they do not form part of this group.
seo wæs wrætlice wundrum gegierwed. [...] 
þu wast, gif þu const,
to geseganne [...] 103

By analogy with these, the remaining riddles which use the technique of a human narrator but which do not address their audience may also be described as texts for private reading, although this is inferential rather than certain. As Agop Hacikyan writes, 'it is evident that these riddles should be attributed to multiple authorship [...] the collection was the outcome of miscellaneous major and minor contributions by a number of poets', 104 and it would be rash to assume that all the riddles were initially composed in the same manner or for the same purpose: indeed, some imply a performative aspect, such as riddle 42:

Ic on fle LTE mæg 
þurh runstafas rincum secgan, 
þam þe bec witan, bega ætsonne 
naman þara wihta. [...] 
Nu is undyrne 
erum æt wine [...] 105

While it is not necessary to assume that the riddle must have been receivedaurally in hall, 106 it is possible that this riddle, among others, was originally intended for group reception. However, the miscellaneous nature of the collections also forces the assumption that the two groups of riddles in the Exeter Book would have attracted a single form of reception, and since the features indicative of private reception which we have been discussing occur in about half of the riddles and are distributed equally between the two groups, we may suggest with some confidence that the collections of texts, if not the original individual works, are most likely to have been received visually, and that the unifying characteristic of the collections was not a common

103 Riddle 36; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 198. Other riddles containing both a narrator and a direct address to the audience include riddles 19 and 32.
105 Riddle 42, ll. 5-8 and 15-16; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, pp. 203-04. I have similarly found only one Latin riddle which addresses its audience in the plural, with 'querite vos ipsi causam qua vender in aruis' (Eusebius no. 5; Glorie, I, p. 215).
106 In particular, the phrase 'to those who know books' may suggest that the references to hall and to men at wine are used imaginatively rather than literally: Seth Lerer argues that on the contrary, 'this poem draws out of the figure of the riddle solver a model for the reader in society' (Literacy and Power in Anglo-Saxon Literature (Lincoln: UNP, 1991), p. 125). The wisdom of the audience is invoked in riddles 28, 31, 32, 35, 39, 41 and 48. Cf. also Tatwine's riddle 40 and his conclusion (Glorie, I, pp. 207 and 208) and Aldhelm's riddle 81 (ibid., p. 468).
intended style of reception for each of the works. Instead, it is most plausible that it is a shared purpose rather than a shared function which unites the texts: the purpose of provoking thought and meditation on the facets of God's creation, as riddle 31 states in its closing lines: 'micel is to hygene / wisum woðboran, / hwæt siw wihst siet'. The collections of riddles were thus most probably - and some of the individual riddles were certainly - approached through private reading, paralleling certain collections of Latin riddles: for example, Symphosius's preface to his collection contains the line 'da ueniam, lector, quod non sapit ebria Musa', while Aldhelm's final riddle ends:

Auscultate mei credentes famina uerbi,
Pandere quae poterit gnarus uix ore magister
Et tamen inquitians non retur friuola lector!
Sciscitor inflatos, fungar quo nomine, sophos.110

Our suggestion of private reading as the probable manner of reception for the collections of vernacular riddles enables us finally to turn to the remaining and largest group of riddles: the fifty-three which use the technique of prosopopoeia, in which the speaker of the poem is, rather than describes, the object or phenomenon which the reader is challenged to identify.111 Of all the riddles these are the least suitable for aural reception, as riddle 18 indicates in its opening line: 'Ic eom wundertlicu wiht / ne maeg word sprecan'.112 While it is possible to assume an intention for oral delivery in the manner of riddle 42 and hence that the line is intended humorously, such an interpretation is challenged by riddle 19, which uses four runic anagrams as well as a narratorial voice which merges into prosopopoeia in the closing phrase:113

Ic on siþe seah . SRO
H : hygewloncne, heafodeorhtne,
[...]. For wæs þy beorhtre,

107 Riddle 31, II. 23-24; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 196. That such is the purpose of the riddles has been suggested by numerous scholars; for several such comments see Hansen, The Solomon Complex, pp. 128-29.
108 Of most relevance here is riddle 60 which, like the Husband's Message of which it is sometimes considered the first part, refers to the audience using the dual pronoun and could not meaningfully have been received aurally: cf. our discussion of the Husband's Message below.
110 Glorie, I, p. 539.
111 The texts which contain this feature are: Riddles 1-12, 14-21, 23-27, 30 a and b, 35, 40, 60-63, 65, 66, 71-73, 76-80, 81, 83, 85, 87, 88 and 91-95, all numbers inclusive, as well as the Leiden Riddle, Plan A.34, Dobbie, Minor Poems, p. 109.
112 Riddle 18, 1.1; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 189.
113 Riddle 86 also opens with a narrator and becomes prosopopoeic in the closing phrase.
If our interpretation of the foregoing texts is valid, then we may now summarise our conclusions concerning narratorial voice and, in particular, prosopopoeic narration. Identificatory reading is a necessity for cases where the work divides from the text, such as prayers and charms, for which the written text possibly was not present at the time of the work's utterance, or for poems which were to be delivered orally from memory, such as the first part of the Cynewulf poems Elene, Juliana and Fates of the Apostles and, possibly, the heroic poems. We have established that for the reader wholly to identify with the narrator there must be little if any character behind the ic-person: there must be no recorded personal history or personality, since such would conflict with that of the person who was to read the text and who then could not make the words his own in his act of reading. Where the narrator is inanimate or at least non-human, as prosopopoeia demands, any oral delivery would take the character of a dramatic performance rather than the mere delivery with which we are chiefly concerned. There is no reason to assume that such an activity was unknown to the Anglo-Saxons, and hence that prosopopoeic texts could not have been received aurally: we must acknowledge, however, that the aural reception of such pieces would have a visual component, and be thus less a variety of reading than of spectating. Insofar as our concern lies with text rather than with drama, therefore, and in the absence of unambiguous evidence for such a practice in Anglo-Saxon England, we shall advance this manner of reception only at a theoretical level.

The argument which we have formulated for prosopopoeic narration is also valid for narration in a specific, identified voice since, as riddle 19 demonstrates, these two techniques were not carefully distinguished and each necessitates a dramatic component. Therefore, we may regard poems which involve the first person narration of a personal history as works which were to be received either through dramatic performance or through a text-based reception such as private or shared reading. Rather than discussing all the texts which use this device individually, we may simply compare Resignation to the Advent Lyrics, both of which address God rather than their readers.

Like many prayers, Resignation is presented in the first person singular voice:

Age mec se ælmihta god,

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114 Riddle 19, ll. 1-2 and 8-9; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, pp. 189-90. Again, the bold type represents runes; this text contains seventeen runes in total.
116 Since the Lyrics were long regarded as part of the Christ poem, they are incorporated in its listing as Plan 3.1; ed. Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, pp. 3-15 and J. J. Campbell, The Advent Lyrics of the Exeter Book (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 1959). Their relation to the Advent O antiphons is discussed in Campbell's introduction at esp. p. 3 and pp. 9-10.
helpe min se halga dryhten! ðu gesceope heofon ond eorfan
ond wundor call, min wundorcyning,
þe þær on sindon, ece dryhten,...]

However, we cannot postulate full identificatory reception for the text, since the ic corresponds to an individual and is not an empty voice which the reader may borrow and make his own, such as we found in the charms and prayers. Rather, the speaker has fallen into poverty and thence into exile; he has received alms and is unable to buy a boat. These specific details prevent our interpreting his tale as an allegory of the Christian life, although the possibility of a metaphorical intent is raised by the passage which W. S. Mackie renders as 'I relate this tale of woe mainly about myself'.

Ic bi me tylgust
secge þis sarspel ond ymb siþ spræce,
longunge fus, ond on lagu þence [...].

The possibility of a limited identification between reader and speaker enables us to suppose that the text has some validity as a prayer: however, the impossibility of full identification between reader and narrator forbids the text-free styles of reception which we suggested for the Cynewulf poems and the charms. In the case of Resignation we cannot separate the work from the text: the work has no validity when divorced from its physical context. Its intended manner of reception must therefore be private reading or, possibly, the 'shared reading' or 'visual reading by proxy' which we suggested was the only non-visual method by which such texts as the 'letters' could have been received.

Strong supporting evidence for our understanding of Resignation may be drawn from the Advent Lyrics, which frequently address God, Jerusalem, Christ and Mary in the second person singular and which use the first person plural rather than singular pronoun, in phrases such as 'huru we for þearfe / þas word spreac'. Advent Lyrics I and III, which are praises to the 'wuldræs ealdor' and to 'sancta hierusalem' respectively, contain neither a narratorial voice nor a characterised speaker with whom the reader could identify and permit us to regard them as prayers, distinguishing between work and text and postulating text-free oral delivery: however, Advent Lyric

117 Resignation, ll. 1-5; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 215.
119 Resignation, ll. 96-98; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 218.
120 Campbell, Advent Lyrics, p. 49 and Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 3. The first person plural pronoun denotes the narrator in seven of the lyrics: Advent Lyrics II, V, VIII, IX, X, XI and XII.
VI also lacks a narratorial voice but cannot be so regarded. The text opens as a praise-poem, like *Lyrics I* and *III*, addressing God in the second person singular:

```
Eala gæsta god,    hu þu gleawlice
mid noman ryhte    nemmed wære
emmanuhel [...].121
```

Following this, however, is a description of the virtuous born before the advent of Christ, who:

```
bidon in bendum    hwonne bearn godes
cwome to cearigum. Forþon cwædon swa,
suslum geslæhtæ:    "Nu þu sylfa cum,
heofones heahcyning. Bring us hælo lif [...]."122
```

Through partial identification or 'simultaneous reception', in which the reader of the text speaks the words as if they were his own while maintaining his identity as reader, the audience awaiting the Second Coming identifies with those awaiting the first advent of the Messiah: those on earth looking for heavenly bliss are linked to those in Hell seeking release from their torments. The partial union of reader with speaker, which is possible only through simultaneous reception, not only heightens the effect of the poem - indeed, permits the poem to succeed - but also explains the otherwise curious line 'ne læt awyrge ofer us / onwald agan'.123 Since the speakers are already in Hell, 'grundas', we should expect an indication that the line describes an existing situation, such as by the inclusion of 'a', 'always', which would be permissible with the vowel alliteration in line 29 and in line 30. Only by assuming a partial identification of reader with speaker is this explained, for with no identification the plea of the speakers in Hell is meaningless, while with full identification there would then be an implication of the Devil wielding supreme power on earth, an unorthodox and heretical view.

*Advent Lyric VI*, therefore, can only be understood coherently as a text intended for simultaneous reception. Through this interpretation, in which the reader joins his voice to those of the men who died before Christ's advent, we may also understand the doxology with which the piece ends as an expression of faith on the part of the reader and the speakers as well as a marker of closing: 'þu in heannissum / wunast wideferh / mid waldend fæder',124 the technique which is also employed in *Advent Lyric XI*,

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123 Ibid., ll. 158-59.
124 Ibid., ll. 162-63.
where the reader is linked to the 'seraphinnes cynn' in their closing prayer 'halig eart þu, halig, / heaengla brego [...] þe in heahþum sié / a butan ende / ece herenis'.125 On the basis of an intention for simultaneous reception, therefore, we may understand the *Lyrics* which use dialogue as a particular and complex group.126 As an illustration of this, we may examine *Advent Lyric IV*, which opens as a praise-poem to Mary with the words 'eala wifa wynn, / geond wuldres þrym / fæmne freolicast'127 and which closes with a typical doxology:

Hyht is onfangen
þæt nu bleutsung mot bæm gemæne,
werum ond wifum, a to worulde foð
in þam uplican engla dreame
mid soðfæder symle wunian.128

While the basic structure of the poem is thus exactly akin to those which we have examined above, there are not only two speakers, the unnamed narrator and the identified characters, but three: the first section of the poem, which is presented in an anonymous voice, not only addresses Mary but requests a response from her, 'arece us',129 to which she replies, addressing 'sunu solime / somod his dohtor'.130 As she characterises the previous speaker, with whom the reader was formerly identified, she is herself identified with the reader who is, at this point in the text, speaking the words and assuming the role of Mary, just as the reader (or reciter) of the *Ave Maria* initially identifies himself with the Archangel Gabriel, or as the reader of the psalms in places identifies himself with David. This identification also explains the use of dialogue without introductory prefaces naming the speakers, a technique used extensively in *Advent Lyric VII*, 'the first "drama" in English',131 which contains five separate speeches, only one of which is prefaced by the phrase þæt a fæmne onwrah / ryhtgeryno, / ond þus reordade'.132 Here, the abrupt changes in speaker which, since the addresses which identify the speakers close rather than open each speech, are clarified only through close analysis of the text, would be difficult to convey orally and are among our strongest strands of evidence for deducing an intention for private

126 It may be possible to understand *Descent into Hell* thus (*Plan* A.3.26; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, pp. 219-23), where the reader could identify with the speech of John the Baptist.
130 Ibid., (l. 91).
Thus, the combination of these features enables us to class the AdvenLyrics as a group of texts which were certainly intended to be approached through simultaneous reception and, based upon this, we must infer that the first person plural refers not to the reader and his audience but to the narrator of the text and the reader, unified through simultaneous reception, or possibly in a wider sense to refer to all men: the texts cannot be understood on the model of the prayers, for full identification is here impossible.

Further supporting evidence for the technique of simultaneous reception is provided by The Order of the World, which opens:

Wilt ðu, fus hæle, fremdne monnan,
wisne woðboran wordum gretan,
fricgan felageongne ymb forgesceaft,
biddan þe gesecge sidra gesceafta [...].

Huppe finds two separate identities in these lines, the 'fus hæle' directly addressed by the second person singular pronoun and the stranger, who is wise (woðboran) and well-travelled (felageongne): thus, he writes that 'the poem begins in direct address to the reader, called a 'wayfaring man', 'fus hæle". However, the characterisation of the second person singular, the seeming direct address to the reader, as 'fus hæle' indicates that it is not the actual audience which is intended but the audience as a representation of man, a familiar form of enallage. This is supported by the use of the second and first persons singular later in the poem:

Leorna þas lare. Ic þe lunge scéal
meotudes mægenspæd maran gesecgan,
þonne þu hygecræftig in hreþre mæge
mode gergipan [...].
Gehyr nu þis herespel ond þinne hyge gefæstna.

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133 It will be remembered that the criterion of abrupt transition between speeches also enabled us to class Pharoah, (Plan 3.28), as a text for private reading.
135 Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 163.
136 Huppe, The Web of Words: Structural Analyses of the Old English Poems 'Vainglory', 'The Wonder of Creation', 'The Dream of the Rood', and 'Judith': With Texts and Translations (Albany: SUNY, 1970), p. 35. Huppe's translation is somewhat free, as he acknowledges in ibid.; alternative renderings of this difficult phrase include Hansen's 'willing man' (Solomon Complex, p. 82) and Mackie's 'mortal man' (Exeter Book, p. 49).
137 Hansen suggests that 'the listener or reader would not of course necessarily identify with the characterised addressee' (Solomon Complex, p. 83).
Are the pronouns to be identified with the characters introduced previously, or do they instead refer directly to the reader and the narrator? Once again the *þu*-person is described, but this time in words which have a more universal application than 'fus hæle', if we are to interpret literally: he is *hygecræfig* and enjoined to strengthen his resolve. However, the *ic*-person, who is the speaker for the remaining lines of the poem, describes the *fæلægeongne* about which the original *þu*-person was directed to ask the *fæлægeongne* in the third line of the poem, indicating a continuity of identity between both persons. Further, the parallel of 'fus hæle' with *fæлægeongne* in the opening lines, in terms both of their metrical position and to a lesser degree of their meaning, suggests an identification of the questioner with the questioned.

We must therefore regard the *þu*-person as connected to the *ic*-person, by the 'fus hæle' / *fæлægeongne* parallel. What Huppé saw as a clear example of direct narratorial address on closer inspection appears to be an elaborate and subtle technique whereby each is subsumed into the other, 'æghwyle wip o þrum', as the inclusive first person plural pronoun later in the poem replaces the earlier usage of singular pronouns in praise of þam gedefestan / þe us þis lif gescop. It is therefore an oversimplification to describe the poem as containing two identities, the narrator and the addressee: rather, the theme of the poem concerns the merging of the two and their extension to encompass not only all readers of the poem but, ultimately, all men. As in the case of *Advent Lyric* VI and of *Resignation*, therefore, the key to the poem lies in its approach by simultaneous reception.

If we may now regard simultaneous reception as the most probable as well as the most suitable means of approach for *The Order of the World* and the *Advent Lyrics*, then we may now briefly conclude our examination of *Christ*, of which the *Advent Lyrics* were formerly regarded as the first part. Like *The Order of the World*, *Christ II* begins with a direct address:

Nu  þu  geornlice  gæstgerynum,
mon  se  mera,  modcraete  sec
þurh  sefan  snyttro  þæt  þu  soð  wite [...].

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141 *Plan A*.3.1; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, pp. 3-49.
143 *Christ*, II. 440-443; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, p. 15; cf. also II. 815-816; Dobbie-Krapp, p. 25.
Sisam bases his assertion that *The Ascension [Christ II]* was written for the instruction, and perhaps at the request of, some great man on this passage (Sisam, ibid., p. 311). In light of our examination of the numerous addresses to the audience in Old English literature, however, Sisam may here be interpreting over-literally.
The use of the second person singular enables us to deduce private reading as the intended approach to *Christ II*; however, Cynewulf also uses the first person plural to link the narrator to his audience in the closing lines:144

Nu is þon gelicost swa we on lagulfode
ofer cald wæter ceolum liðan [...].
utan us to þære hyðe hyht stapelian,
ða us gerymde rodera waldend,
ahlege on healþu, þa he heofonum astag.145

While these uses of the 'inclusive we' could be seen as indicative of simultaneous reception, it is not necessary to assume this style of approach. Just as the orator in the verbatim sermons which we examined above uses this form of expression to include his audience and to mark the ending of his text, so Cynewulf uses it for closing passages, whether to a section of the poem or to the poem as a whole. The lines cited above may be suitable for identificatory reading, but they do not demand such an approach and, based upon the direct address and reference to the audience, we may simply describe *Christ II* as a text intended for private or for shared reading.

The same is not true for *Christ III*, the longest part of the *Christ*-poem, if such be a valid concept.146 This text does not involve an identified narrator and uses the first person plural only in its widest sense, in phrases such as 'eala þær we nu magon / wæpe firene / geseon on ussum sawlum'147 and 'nu we sceolon georne / gleawlice þurfseon usse heþpercocfan':148 further, since the limited dialogue in the text is preceded by passages which identify the speakers, it is possible that the work could have been received aurally through memorisation and text-free delivery. Of some interest for us are the passages in which Christ speaks to the saved and to the damned at Judgement day. In the first of these we find the second person plural, as we should expect:

"Onfæ ðu mid freondum mines fæder rice
þæt eow wæs ær woruldum wynlice gearo [...].149

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144 Section III of *Christ II*, ll. 600-685, uses the first person plural in its widest sense, applying to the 'werþeode' of line 600; as we have discussed above, this usage is not significant for us.
146 Sisam describes the text as 'the problem of the first 1664 lines in the Exeter Book' in his 'Cynewulf and his Poetry', p. 309.
148 Ibid., ll. 1327-29; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, p. 40. The first person plural is used a third time, again in its widest sense, at l. 1549; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, p. 46.
149 Ibid., ll. 1344-45; Dobbie-Krapp, *Exeter*, p. 40. The speech continues to l. 1360.
Towards the end of Christ's address to the damned we also find the second person plural: however, the bulk of the speech uses the second person singular:

\[\text{Onginne}\text{d sylf cwe}\text{gan, swa he to anum sprece, ond hwæ\textasciitilde{}re ealle mæne}\text{d, firenysnyng folc, frea ælmihtig:}"Hwæt, ic þec mon minum hondum ærest geworhte, ond þe ondgiet sealde [...].\]

Since enallage is used in numerous texts, it would seem unlikely that the intended audience would not have been sufficiently familiar with it to understand the rhetorical use of the second person singular in this context. Rather than understanding the explanation of enallage in terms of audience level, therefore, we may draw an analogy with the use of direct speech in the Cynewulfian works intended for oral delivery. As we have noted, direct speech in narratives can only clearly be understood aurally when it is prefaced by announcements of who will be speaking to whom, and frequently in what mood: while the effect of enallage is particularly striking here, therefore, it would be especially necessary to preface the speech with an explanation. While there is no reason to assume that the text was not intended to be read privately, its use of the 'empty speaker' and its otherwise curious explanation of enallage enables us to note its potential for text-free reception through oral delivery.

The remaining Old English poems may now briefly be categorised according to the criteria which we have established. The Husband's Message may be classed as a text intended for private reading on the basis of several features. Firstly, the text uses prosopopoec narration, opening 'nu ic onsundran / þe secgan wille',\footnote{Ibid., ll. 1376-1380; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, p. 41. The speech continues to l. 1514, using the second person plural from l. 1499.} using the second person pronoun to address its solitary reader: the addressed reader is not the audience of the poem, however, but the lover of a lord, while the addressee is not the lord but the text itself, which addresses both the woman and her lover by the dual pronoun in the closing lines. While the runes in the final lines may be articulated and therefore do not necessitate visual reception, as we have seen, it is difficult to imagine the poem being delivered orally. Indeed, if the charms which we examined above can be understood only as works rather than as texts, The Husband's Message is valid only as a text: just as Advent Lyric VI is comprehensible only through simultaneous reception, so this poem is intelligible only through private reading, in which the reader

\footnote{Plan A.3.32; Dobbie-Krapp, Exeter, pp. 225-27.}

\footnote{Ibid., l. 1.}
takes the role of eavesdropper, identifying himself neither with the \textit{wulf}-person (the woman) nor with the \textit{ig}-person (the text).

Similarly, \textit{Wulf and Eadwacer}\footnote{Plan A.3.21; Dobbie-Krapp, \textit{Exeter}, pp. 179-80.} addresses named characters rather than the audience in the lines 'wulfl min wulf' and 'gehyrest \textit{wulf} eadwacer'.\footnote{Ibid., ll. 13 and 16.} While the poem cannot easily be construed as a direct address to either, we may suggest that like many of the riddles, the aural reception of \textit{Wulf and Eadwacer} would have necessitated a performance and that in the absence of any specific evidence for this, we may postulate private reading as the intended manner of reception with some confidence. Similarly, we may regard \textit{The Dream of the Rood}, \textit{The Seafarer}, \textit{The Rimming Poem}, \textit{Deor}, \textit{The Wife's Lament} and \textit{Judgement Day II},\footnote{Plan A.2.5, A.3.9, A.3.15, A.3.20, A.3.23 and A.17 respectively. While the last text is a close translation of \textit{De die iudicii} attributed to Bede, as we have repeatedly noted in this thesis the mere fact of a text's being derivative is not a sufficient reason for our discarding the text.} each of which is 'ostensibly based upon a specific personal experience or observation'\footnote{Greenfield, 'The Old English Elegies', in \textit{Continuations and Beginnings}, pp. 142-75 (p. 143). Cf. also Rosemary Woolf, 'The \textit{Wanderer}, The \textit{Seafarer}, and the Genre of \textit{Planctus}', in \textit{Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Essays in Appreciation. For John C. McGalliard}, ed. by Dolores Warwick Frese and Lewis E. Nicholson (Notre Dame, IN: UNDP, 1975), pp. 192-207 (pp. 192-93).} and presented in an identified first person singular voice, as texts which are also most suitably approached through private or through shared reading: like \textit{Wulf and Eadwacer} it would be necessary to assume performance as the means by which the works were transmitted orally, so that we must assume the texts to have been present at the time of their reception, which occurs only in the cases of shared or private reading: however, there is a greater potential for aural reception for these works than for \textit{The Husband's Message}.\footnote{Close to this group but with slightly more potential for oral delivery may be classed the \textit{Soul and Body} poems (Plan A.2.3 and A.3.19; ed. Krapp, \textit{Vercelli}, pp. 54-59 and Dobbie-Krapp, \textit{Exeter}, pp. 174-78). While the changes of voice are well prepared, as in \textit{Judith} and \textit{Juliana}, the extended discourses which use the second person singular, with which a solitary and individual audience could identify to a certain extent, imply a greater need for performance and a greater suitability for private reading than we found in, for example, \textit{Elene}; this argument may also be applied to the prose \textit{Solomon and Saturn} and \textit{Adrian and Ritheus}, which we discussed in ch. 5 above.} Further, while much of \textit{The Wanderer}\footnote{Plan A.3.6; Dobbie-Krapp, \textit{Exeter}, pp. 135-37.} is a monologue, the narrator's identification of the speaker indicates a potential for oral delivery:

\begin{verbatim}
Swa cwæð eardstapa,  earfeþa gemyndig,
wræþa wæslehta,  winemæga hyre [...].
Swa cwæð snottor on mode,  gesæt him sundor æt rune.\footnote{\textit{Wanderer}, ll. 6-7 and l. 111; Dobbie-Krapp, \textit{Exeter}, pp. 135 and 137.}
\end{verbatim}

The fact that the poem opens in the voice of the wanderer rather than of the narrator, however, would still necessitate a performative element for its aural reception and
allows us to view the poem as being more suitable for oral delivery than *The Wife's Lament* but less suitable than *Elene*: similarly, the monologue of Widsith is preceded and followed by identificatory passages in the narratorial voice, enabling us to regard *Widsith* as akin to *The Wanderer* in terms of its reception. Also among this group, *Precepts* consists of the advice of a father to his son, each section of which is preceded by identificatory passages such as 'feder eft his sunu / frod gegrette / ofre sipre', a 'framing device' presented in the narratorial voice. While Tom Shippey regards the text as one intended for private reading, as implied by his references to 'the son and reader', there seems no reason to regard the text as being of a different kind from *Widsith* merely because the father's speeches address a character: it would still be possible to receive the text aurally and the degree of performing required in addressing a fictive son is no greater than that for assuming the voice of the wanderer. Again, therefore, we may regard the poem as one which was probably approached through private or through shared reading, but which could have been used as the basis of a performance. Finally, while it is possible that the function of *The Rune Poem* 'is very evident: to provide a list of rune-names in a memorable and recitable form', as Shippey continues:

> However the length and complexity of its definitions seems too much for perfect mnemonic efficiency, so that one would end by struggling to remember the lines rather than just the order of the runes [...] the poet had some slight ambition to entertain or instruct in addition to teaching prospective readers their 'alphabet'.

Since our examination of the riddles has indicated that the names rather than the shapes of the runes were a sufficient datum for audience recognition, and since we have demonstrated that the runes need to be named rather than merely seen for the poem to function, there seems no reason for us to assume a necessity for private reading: while such would seem the most appropriate approach, we cannot discount the possibility of solely aural reception.

160 Anne Savage describes many of these works as 'meditative' in her 'The Place of Old English Poetry in the English Meditative Tradition', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England: Exeter Symposium IV: Papers read at Dartington Hall, July 1987*, ed. by Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987), pp. 91-110. While this may be an apt description of the style of private reading by which they might have been approached, her use of the term is insufficiently precise for us to apply it here to any benefit.


166 Ibid.
Since none of the remaining Anglo-Saxon poems bears any indications of the manner in which it was intended to be approached which would enhance our argument, it would seem unnecessary to discuss them here: instead, we may now summarise our conclusions for the poetic corpus before returning to the prose in our concluding chapter.

Firstly, we may confirm the premise with which we began our argument in stating that many Old English poems closely correspond to their prose counterparts in terms of their intended manner of reception: as in previous chapters, we have been able to identify works which were intended for private reading, for oral delivery to a group and for oral delivery to an individual. Further, and again like the prose, we have found numerous texts which could not readily be categorised: in each case where oral delivery was theoretically possible, therefore, we acknowledged that the poem could have been received through a variety of reading styles and classed it as a reading-text. We were, however, able to establish that the oral delivery of a poem in the absence of the written text was most feasible where the narrator of the work was devoid of personal characteristics, as we found in the charms, the prayers and in certain sermons: where the narrator was given a personal history, a character or a name, we were able to state that the text-free reception of the work would have necessitated a dramatic performance, the lack of evidence for which practice forced us rather to suggest private or shared reading as the most probable manner of reception for such texts. Finally, we have discussed a particular style of reading which we have termed 'simultaneous reception', to which we shall return in the conclusion below: for having now exhausted the verbal indications for the Anglo-Saxons' approach to their vernacular literature, we may in closing turn to the wider implications of our conclusions.

167 Further and minor points could still be adduced; for example, The Panther, The Whale and The Partridge may be described as texts for private or for shared reading based on their references to themselves and to each other as texts and on their relation to the Physiologus (Cf. Kennedy, Early English Christian Poetry, p. 217); writing of these Greenfield notes that 'the poem itself shows a unity' (Critical History, p. 181). Further, we might suggest that the Metres of Boethius (Krapp, ed., The Paris Psalter and the Metres of Boethius, ASPR 5 (New York, NY: CoUP, 1932)) and the Chronicle poems would most probably have been approached through private or through shared reading: however, such bald categorising is not advancing.
Conclusion

Having now completed our examination of surviving Old English texts it remains for us to restate our conclusions. Through distinguishing between the solitary reader and the group audience and between the audiences of the work and of the text, we have been able in most cases to determine how each Old English text was intended to be approached, or at the very least have reduced the range of possible styles of approach to a given work. Before examining the potentials for research which this data offers and discussing the major lacunae in our work, we must briefly review our arguments.

We began with the large body of Anglo-Saxon vernacular texts which address their audiences, through the examination of which we formed our initial structure of Anglo-Saxon reception. Following the method of analysis first proposed by Crosby,¹ we began with texts which addressed their audiences exclusively by the second person singular pronouns: such texts were clearly intended for private reading by individuals and could not have been received aurally by a group without some loss of sense. Secondly, we examined texts which addressed their audiences by the second person plural pronouns or by such phrases as 'men þa leofestan': these works were clearly intended to be received aurally rather than through private and visual reading. However, it is not possible for a group to read a text simultaneously: there must be an intermediary who reads the text to the congregation. This individual, the lector, is sometimes also addressed in such texts, most commonly in the titles or epilogues to the text rather than in the texts themselves: strictly, he is the sole audience of the written text, while the group may be seen as either the audience of the work or the audience of the lector.

The difference between these two categorisations of the group is of some importance. Where the speaker or narrator of a text is little more than a device, with no personality or personal history, it is possible for the lector to present himself as that speaker: he assumes the 'empty ic' of the text. From the perspective of the congregation, the lector uses his own words to address them: they are his audience. This differs sharply from the audience of the work, in which the lector is clearly reading from a text and delivering words which he neither wrote nor composed: the authorial presence is felt and the lector, as well as the audience, is the audience of the work. Here the lector is irrelevant, for any literate member of the audience could perform his actions: he is simply the instrument through which the words on the page

¹ Crosby's research is discussed in the introduction above.
are given voice. Such is not the case for the sermons and for other items which use the 'empty ic' where, from the perspective of the listening group, the lector is all.

We were thus able to differentiate between texts where the reader identifies with the second and with the first persons. To this, we added the limited data which is available for Anglo-Saxon and early medieval reading practices and were able to describe various environments in which reading occurred: the formal style of reception in chapter-houses and refectories; the informal style of reading in groups which Asser describes; the delivery of a sermon after the gospel-reading at Mass, and so on. Each of these environments contributes to the audience's experience of the text and it is necessary to recognise their differences: however, it was rarely possible to ascertain with confidence which of these would have been used - or would not have been used - for a certain text. Our inability to resolve this question is natural: while the nature and the form of the text determine the manners in which it could be received, it is the value of the text which determines the environment in which it would be read, and the perception of a text's inherent value lies, to return to the terminology of Parks, in the real rather than the diegetic universe.

It is precisely this difficulty which prevented our describing texts for private reading as texts for ruminatio, for silent or for vocalic or sub-vocalic reading: however, our understanding of the vocal reading style whereby the ears, rather than the eyes, were the site of reception was of some importance to us. The style of silent and rapid reading which is the prerogative of the modern literate is a prerequisite for and dependent on such phenomena as transparency of text: whether or not silent reading was known and practiced in Anglo-Saxon England, we cannot equate the activity with our own, highly developed form. The medieval reader is by definition at a further remove from his text: the psychological phenomena through which the modern Western literate approaches his text cannot occur without such features as regularity and homogeneity of script, equal spacing and a host of other physical characteristics dependent not merely on the advent of printing but on the development of moveable type. These matters cannot apply to the medieval reader, for whom reading was a conscious, rather than an unconscious, activity.

2 This argument derives in part from Victor Nell, Lost in a Book: The Psychology of Reading for Pleasure (New Haven, CT: YUP, 1988). There is a large bibliography for the mechanics of the contemporary reading process: see in particular Pollatsek and Rayner, Psychology of Reading and Taylor and Taylor, Psychology of Reading, esp. 'Word Recognition', pp. 184-205. A dissenting note in the analysis of reading is struck by D. Alcott, D. Besnar, E. Davelar and others in their 'Wholistic Reading of Alphabetic Print: Evidence from the FDM and the FBI', in Orthographies and Reading: Perspectives from Cognitive Psychology, Neuropsychology, and Linguistics, ed. by Leslie Henderson (London: Erlbaum, 1984), pp. 121-35: 'there is no convincing evidence that readers of alphabetic English can treat their print as though it was not composed of letters. Letter recognition is therefore seen as a necessary preliminary to word recognition' (p. 132).
The consciousness of reception enabled us better to understand certain texts which have perplexed a number of scholars, such as *The Order of the World* and the *Advent Lyrics*. Through simultaneous reception, in which the solitary reader participates in his text while maintaining his identity as audience, the identities of speaker, author and audience are merged: indeed, *The Order of the World* plays on this phenomenon. Our caution in applying our conception of simultaneous reception forced us to propose it only for these works: however, if our understanding of this reading style can be accepted, the possibility of a wider application for the style may then be investigated. It is certain that only through this technique can the texts which we named be understood: however, it is likely that a richer understanding of other works may be obtained through an analysis on the basis of simultaneous reception.

We have now summarised the chief results of our investigation: namely, our ability to describe the majority of Anglo-Saxon vernacular texts according to their use rather than their content and our discussion of the potentials for literary criticism which a close examination of the mechanics of medieval reading permits, for the interaction between text and audience is dependent on understanding the actions of the reader. The very feature on which our argument has been based, the addresses to the audience, itself concerns the interaction between author and reader or hearer: as we saw most clearly from the *Enchiridion*, the concept of the mass audience was novel to the early medieval author who, most notably in the case of Byrhtferth, regarded the text as a development of conversation rather than as a separate form of communication. Like the trend from vocal to silent reading, the growing medieval perception of the distinct characteristics of writing as a particular means of communication separate from speech is generally accepted but not documented: our preliminary investigation of the issue here indicates that the data for this development is readily accessible and would certainly repay research.

Rather than re-examining texts which do not contribute to these issues, such as educational and liturgical texts or items such as 'Address to an individual', which served as a paradigm for an oral event or, if it were used, required an exceptional style of oral delivery, we shall now examine the limitations of our arguments. We have briefly summarised our investigation and its most pertinent results: the details of the each text and of the spectrum of reception according to which they may be understood which we have established are discussed in the foregoing chapters, and it would seem repetitious as well as redundant to repeat this material here. It may be true that we have refined our understanding of the medieval text: however, we have worked throughout with certain constrictions, which have reduced the impact of our research and limited its application.
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Firstly, we must acknowledge that the vast majority of literature produced in Anglo-Saxon England was written in Latin: we have not discussed this material. While the few comparative examinations which we undertook imply that the Latin texts will not negate our arguments, a sound understanding of Anglo-Saxon literacy is dependent on a full examination of all the written texts within the culture. It is necessary to determine whether or not the audience of vernacular texts was less sophisticated than the audience of Latin texts; whether there is any overlap between the two audiences; whether the styles of reception which we have examined for vernacular texts are equally applicable to texts in Latin; and many more questions of this nature could be proposed. It is impossible within the confines of one thesis to attempt to resolve such questions: however, the absence of such research places severe limitations on our interests.

Secondly, we have not discussed the various arguments for the levels of Anglo-Saxon literacy. As we noted in the introduction above, there is a grave paucity of such data which is in any case limited to a small number of places at certain times: however, questions concerning the identity and the nature of the Anglo-Saxon audience cannot for long be dismissed as insoluble: they are in any case not irrelevant. The present lack of knowledge of these issues has again forced us to exercise caution: our description of styles of reception therefore derived from the minimum possible assumptions concerning the capability of its practitioners. For example, letters, which we described as texts addressed to a named individual intended for private reading, could have been read out to that individual by another rather than viewed by him personally, due to his preference (whether by choice or by necessity) for aural reception: this is essentially a delegation of private reading, and the illiteracy or otherwise of the recipient does not negate our arguments. As Wormald writes:

'[Æthelweard and his son] may not, in the modern sense, have read [Ælfric's texts]. Equally, it splits hairs to insist that they could not: they still wished to own [Ælfric's] books'.3

If reading were an activity which could be delegated, as writing certainly was, it may well be that the literacy of an individual is entirely irrelevant: in that case, however, we must make certain assumptions about the identities of the audience. Writing is an unnecessary skill only if one has constant access to a scribe: to say the same about reading one must assume that the practice occurred only in monasteries and large households. The sheer cost of an Anglo-Saxon book may in any case force this conclusion: however, may we accept the contingent proposition, that reading, like writing, was a technical skill without great prestige? The paradox in our understanding

3 'Anglo-Saxon Society', p. 18 (his italics).
of Anglo-Saxon literacy, that the ability to read was respected but rarely exercised, has not been resolved: whether or not the anthropological distinction between professional, pragmatic and cultured readers has validity for the Anglo-Saxon period is an issue of some importance not merely for our historical understanding but for our appreciation of early medieval literature.

Further, and perhaps most importantly, we have confined our examination to pre-Conquest vernacular literature produced in England: we have examined neither the vernacular products of Wales, Ireland and the continent nor texts produced subsequently in England. If there is any clear evidence for the practice of silent reading and for the growing perception of the audience as an unknown quality in Anglo-Saxon England, it must be deduced from later medieval sources and in particular from the numerous depictions of reading in illuminated manuscripts: further, supporting evidence for the significance of addresses to the audience may be gleaned from the considerable body of literature from the later Middle Ages. We have on occasion alluded to Chaucer’s descriptions of reading and of educational practices above, and have mentioned Chrétien de Troyes in connexion with the mode of group reading; a more full examination would, for example, have discussed the several addresses to the audience in Mirk’s *Festial,* which provide strong supporting evidence for our interpretation of Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies,* which also seek to provide a sermon for the major feasts of the liturgical year.

Finally, we have made only a minor use of the manuscript contexts of the texts which we have discussed, concerning ourselves chiefly with the intention of the author of a text at the time of its composition rather than with the aims of the compiler of the manuscript in which it survives or with the aims of the commissioner of the text. As we have noted repeatedly, the physical context of a text is an invaluable source of information for the use of its contents: while it is clearly impossible here to examine every surviving manuscript which contains items in Old English, our occasional references to such features as illustrations in manuscripts has, while sharpening our understanding of the text under discussion, also raised questions for each text for which we have not discussed its physical appearance. This lacuna is nowhere more apparent than for fragmentary texts. As we noted, the mere fact of a text containing the ‘men pa leofestan’ address is irrelevant if the text is a few lines long and breaks off in the middle of a sentence: however, we must determine whether the text was deliberately fragmented by its transcriber, and if so to what purpose; whether it was simply abandoned in mid-transcription or whether it was copied from a decaying exemplar merely for preservation. If the last of these should prove valid, then in what sense can

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we discuss the 'audience' of the text? Does this show respect for the written word, that it should be preserved even when rendered meaningless, or would the copying of such fragments simply have formed a monastic penance? Such questions, which are particularly relevant in this context to MSS BL Cotton Vespasian D. XIV and Bodleian Junius 85-86, which we discussed above, must also be resolved for our understanding of Anglo-Saxon literacy and of the purpose of the surviving manuscripts.

These, then, represent some of the difficulties in our examination of Old English texts. Our awareness of these difficulties has influenced our discussion and it is to be hoped, at least for the majority of the texts which we have discussed, that we have not assumed resolutions to these issues in advance of such facts as may yet be gleaned: however, our avoidance of such assumptions has necessarily caused ambiguities where precision may later be possible. It is to be hoped that our relative placing of texts on the spectrum of reception may point towards an absolute understanding of the uses of the texts, which will in turn permit the application of reception theory to the Old English text: it is also possible that our examination of the use of opening and closing phrases in the works has supported the receptional rather than compositional understanding of the Bowran formula. Our conclusion, therefore, is temporary and represents a means to an end rather than an end in itself: the full recognition of the Anglo-Saxons' understanding of their contemporary vernacular literature.
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In constructing this index it has been necessary to sacrifice consistency to ease of reference. Since many texts have similar titles, they are listed here in blocks according to common features: thus, individual works of Cynewulf are listed under his name, individual sermons from the Blickling book are listed under Blickling, and so forth. When an attribution is uncertain, the title is preceded by a query (?). Texts which have been given working titles in the thesis are presented thus: (*Rules I).

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