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Diverse Minds in Early Medieval England

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Abstract

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In this thesis, descriptions of minds in primary sources are explored in order to come to a better understanding of the range of concepts of minds and their functioning existed in the early medieval period (600-1100) in England. This research project responds critically to scholarship on early medieval minds that centralises a standard or ideal model of the mind, influenced by modern medical concepts and philosophical traditions, but that tends to exclude descriptions of minds in the primary sources that conflict with this idea of the mind. The diversity of concepts in texts from early medieval England suggests that conventional models of the early medieval mind should be re-examined, nuanced and enlarged. The primary literature encompasses a wide range of descriptions of minds that are not easily categorised in terms of health or normality, but which instead depict minds as diverse, changing and contingent on physical and emotional state, stage in life, and so on. Furthermore, early medieval concepts of mind appear to include minds and cognitive processes that extend or travel outside the human body, that are non-human in origin, and that continue to exist after death. Recognising such descriptions as part of early medieval ideas about minds transforms our comprehension of historical perspectives on minds and mental activity, with further implications for a wide range of fields of study, such as research into relics or objects. By engaging both with modern models and paradigms, as well as bringing together a wide range of primary material, this thesis opens a discussion about early medieval minds that goes beyond normality and dysfunction to acknowledge variety, diversity and difference.

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Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Merel Veldhuizen

Title of thesis: Diverse Minds in Early Medieval England

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

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2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. None of this work has been published before submission;

Signature: M. Veldhuizen Date: 15/10/2021

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Introduction

The textual and material legacy that survives from early medieval England demonstrates a tremendous interest in the functioning of minds in this period. The richness of Latin and especially of Old English vocabulary denoting the mind, the frequency with which early medieval English people contemplated their mental states, and the extent of described cognition in all types of literature lead us to appreciate that the subject of minds was a fundamental aspect of early medieval English culture. Consequently, an elementary understanding of this is essential for any present-day researcher of the early medieval period. This research project is guided by the aim to encompass a broad variety of philosophical and medical views on the mind in the literature and material culture of early medieval England. The extraordinary sophistication, complexity, and diversity of concepts of mind present in this period, however, make it a challenging undertaking to provide any kind of framework or overview of this subject. While scholarship has provided an impressive body of work on the concept of the early medieval mind, it has occasionally simplified or condensed the range of notions discovered in the primary sources. Some interpretations of descriptions of minds have previously relied on the imposition of present-day philosophical and psychological models. Several of these contemporary interpretations have concentrated on revealing a united model of early medieval minds, mapping out how the standard mind was seen.[1] However, descriptions of irregularities and diversity of minds are usually not included in such models. This project therefore intends to consolidate various types of research on minds in early medieval England and to include primary materials that have not been considered to be fruitful sources of information on minds. Building on the important work of scholars such as Malcolm Godden, Leslie Lockett and Antonina Harbus, I propose an approach that attends to the rich diversity of minds presented in early medieval English sources. The combination of these scholarly findings and newly introduced material functions as a foundation for this project, opening up unexplored avenues for research, and demonstrating that consideration of a broader range of sources leads to many new perspectives.

Disparity between established scholarly models of an ideal mind as found in the primary literature, and the fragmentation of other studies that are only indirectly considered

[1] See for example Malcolm R. Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 271-98., Leslie Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies in the Vernacular and Latin Traditions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011)., and Antonina Harbus, *The Life of the Mind in Old English Poetry* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002).

to be related to the mind, means that the current state of research on minds in early medieval England is somewhat incomplete and divided. A portion of this division was likely brought about by the selection of primary texts from specific literary genres. Primary source texts that informed the models of an early medieval English mind have mostly included Old English poetry, hagiography, and occasionally medical sources in the works of, for example, Lockett and Harbus.[2] While there has also been scholarly attention given to minds in other genres of literature, as well as to specific aspects or functioning of the mind, these types of research rarely build on or connect with the foundation of scholarly knowledge on early medieval minds in England. For example, scholars researching mental health and illness in the past often select primarily medical sources and the scope of their findings concerns the field of history of medicine but does not engage with the philosophical traditions from which these descriptions of minds derive.[3] Furthermore, studies examining a specific aspect or behaviour of the mind such as Wendy Turner's *Madness in Medieval Law and Custom*, or Peter Dendle's *Demon Possession in Anglo-Saxon England* are of great interest and importance, but they contain little connection to other theoretical studies on the mind.[4] Nor do they give explanations on where madness, or mental otherness and vulnerability originate according to the range of primary source descriptions that are available. Such projects suggest that certain descriptions of behaviour of minds warrant a place in, for example, disability studies, but fall outside the scope of studies that concentrate on various concepts of mind.

This research project will expand and compare these fields of study on human minds in the early medieval period, and connect them to primary source descriptions that have not yet been considered to involve minds. For example, several fascinating present-day publications examine non-human cognitive activity in animals or objects, but their authors do not respond to theories on early medieval human minds and instead often prefer to speak of 'agency' or 'voice' to describe what I will argue leads to a concept of mind.[5] Similarly, there has been interest in the production of miracles and the behaviour of saints' relics in hagiography, and while these are often considered to be material objects, many of the primary source descriptions appear to indicate forms of remaining cognitive functioning, which are

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[2] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies.*, and Harbus, *The Life of the Mind.*

[3] Simon Kemp, *Medieval Psychology*, Contributions in Psychology 14 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1994)., Christopher Pell, '"Him Bið Sona Sel": Psychiatry in the Anglo-Saxon Leechbooks', *History of Psychiatry*, 22.4 (2011), 434-47.

[4] Wendy J. Turner, *Madness in Medieval Law and Custom* (Leiden: Brill, 2010)., Peter Dendle, *Demon Possession in Anglo-Saxon England* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2014).

[5] James Paz, *Nonhuman Voices in Anglo-Saxon Literature and Material Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017)., Catherine E. Karkov, *The Art of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011).

not discussed as such.[6] This cognitive agency is described in hagiographical texts as residing in the bodily remains of saints, and its functioning is dependent on the state of their relics. These observations are derived from a substantial body of work of both primary and secondary sources that provides a rich seam of knowledge for studies on the topic of early medieval minds, but which so far has not been treated this way.

Much insight can be gained from the comparison and critical examination of descriptions of various types of minds and cognitive functioning across different fields and genres of literature. It is the purpose of this research project to bring these areas of interest together and to consolidate and cultivate knowledge about early medieval minds that has thus far been restricted to a limited sphere of influence. This is important, as many of the primary sources, including the medical books and poetry, consistently reveal that early medieval English people considered their minds to be diverse, changeable throughout and beyond the lifecycle. Some sources, such as riddles and various material objects, indicate a belief that minds could be extended or relocated outside the limits of the human body, and there are indications that animals and even objects were considered to contain types of mental process or awareness, thus behaving similarly to human minds. Where secondary literature often prioritises readings of metaphorical or symbolical meaning, I will demonstrate that a literal interpretation of some sources leads to the discovery of non-human concepts of mind.[7] This enables me to include and examine descriptions of animal minds and other constructed non-human minds in poetry, riddles and material culture, which have simply not been considered to belong to this particular field or to the scope of a research project on minds. As I will show, these varied and complex sources confirm that studying aspects related to the early medieval mind in isolation conveys a limited representation of a larger interconnected field. Simultaneously, the diversity of findings in the primary sources suggests that the pursuit to identify a single model of the early medieval mind is methodologically problematic, and that any attempt to recover a coherent or consistent theory of mind runs counter to the evidence of primary sources. It is therefore crucial that diverse descriptions are now included in scholarship on early medieval minds and in the fields of philosophy and history of medicine

[6] David Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989)., Julia M. H. Smith, 'Rulers and Relics c.750-950: Treasure on Earth, Treasure in Heaven' *Past and Present* (2010), 73-96., Robyn Malo, *Relics and Writing in Late Medieval England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).
[7] Britt Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities: The Old English Poetics of Mentality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

more broadly, in order to come to a more complete and nuanced account of minds as historically understood.

This research project takes a source-led, revisionist approach, in which I examine variation in descriptions of minds in sources from early medieval England, and their behaviour across a range of genres. The key objective of my research is to expand present-day models of medieval minds by incorporating previously overlooked primary source descriptions and accounts. The innovation that this project brings to the field of research on minds in early medieval England lies primarily in its main methodological approach, defined by the scope of my selection of sources. The primary sources selected include not only medical books, religious and philosophical texts and poetry, but also law codes, riddles, certain inscribed material objects and relics, bringing together and comparing very different ideas on minds in different kinds of source. I critically examine the Latin and Old English lexicon, and the language used in present-day medieval scholarship to represent and explore minds. This enables me to demonstrate that the vocabulary for mind, as well as poetic conventions, constraints and descriptions in early medieval England reveal that their extant literary and material culture encompass much broader definitions of mind than have previously been admitted. Concepts of minds vary widely across and within different sources, and there are indications that suggest particular expectations existed of development and change throughout a person's life and even after death. While the scope of this project is thus very broad, and all aspects of minds in the early medieval period are considered to be of interest, certain methods of exploring historical mental illness fall outside of its parameters. Several medieval medical recipes and diagnoses will be discussed but my research approach focuses on diversity of minds without the central aim of seeking to retrospectively identify health or illness. The concepts of mind and ideas expressed in the primary sources are the principal area of concern. This approach and the incorporation of the aforementioned range of sources is intended to bring about an expanded, more complete understanding of the ways in which early medieval people thought of the constitution, content and behaviour of their minds.

The structure of this thesis reflects the objective to investigate previously overlooked aspects or notions of minds in order to come to a broader definition of what minds may have been considered to be. I therefore begin by identifying the complexity and problems that come with comparing early medieval notions on minds to modern ones, and I focus on the significance of language and translation for these notions in Chapter 1. The range of lexical

freedom and fluidity of early medieval vocabulary for mind indicates that there is a range of different concepts of mind which appear in different types of literary sources. This realisation influences the choices I make in my translations throughout the thesis. I then move on to trace philosophical traditions in early medieval English literature, as identified by scholarship. These traditions, concerning dualism and corporeality of minds, will be discussed in the second chapter of this thesis. Based on my findings here, I argue that the development of a comprehensive overview of early medieval minds is stunted by the models and paradigms imposed by scholarship. Primary sources indicate that there are no rigid distinctions in concepts of mind found in different genres of source texts, but instead demonstrate that diverse and even contradictory ideas are frequently discernible in the same text. Through close reading of original textual fragments and connecting them to a large amount of scholarly work, I shed a light on the contradictions and diversity of concepts of the mind. The third chapter of this thesis examines descriptions of minds that imply that different types of growth and change were expected to occur during different stages in life. I pay particular attention to descriptions that suggest that mental changes were contingent on personal emotional and physical circumstances, such as the influence of pregnancy on women's minds. This approach allows us to shift our focus from the present-day scholarly models depicting an ideal or theoretical mind, discussed in the second chapter of the thesis, and reveal notions of diversity of minds found in every stage of the early medieval course of life. The first three chapters of this thesis represent an inclusive examination of primary and secondary material on the constitution and behaviour of minds in early medieval England during life.

The fourth chapter of this thesis approaches concepts of minds in a very different way. In addition to descriptions that show diversity of minds during human life, early medieval literature and material culture from England are brimming with descriptions of minds that are not part of the human body, but which move or appear outside the human body. In these descriptions, minds can apparently manifest or originate in objects or animals. The sheer volume of references to such minds in early medieval culture indicates that it is crucial to include these when conducting a study on early medieval minds. The fourth chapter's structure is based on the different types of mind I have identified, which are extended minds, travelling minds and non-human minds. My findings show that the sources' attention to, and detailed descriptions of such minds are telling of the importance attributed to these as part of the range of possible variants of minds in early medieval England. While Chapter 4 focuses on the non-human minds, Chapter 5 explores descriptions in early

medieval hagiography that suggest that the minds or cognition of saints can continue to survive after death in their relics or contact relics. This concept challenges notions of living and dead cognition, corporeality and materiality, and thus connects and completes my range of findings on human and non-human minds. This investigation of the representation of the bodies and material possessions of saints in hagiography, contact relics and reliquaries, can help us to understand how ways of thinking about the mind in early medieval England manifested themselves in a different type of text and material than previously recognised. It is important to now acknowledge that this material contains elements that can tell us about minds, because the inclusion of these sources in research on minds can provoke dramatically new insights into the ideas and philosophies of minds present in early medieval England.

A Note on the Sources

This thesis consults a wide range of primary sources, dating from what I refer to as the early medieval period, ranging roughly from 600-1100 A.D.; during which the vernacular Old English was spoken and written alongside Latin. This project is concerned with ideas that existed about the mind during that time in the geographical area that we now call England, but which throughout this historical period was divided in various ways. I am aware of, and acknowledge the obvious difficulties in imposing a modern national boundary to this kind of research, but it is necessary in order to maintain workable parameters. I consciously refer to early medieval England, rather than Anglo-Saxon England, although both terms create an apparent sense of unity which is anachronistic when referring to the various kingdoms that were part of this territory. The term 'Anglo-Saxon', which has long been considered suitable, has various other problematic connotations. While this has been acknowledged for some time, it has only recently been acted on by scholars.[8] The term 'Anglo-Saxon' was and is still used in this field to refer to a group of medieval people and their culture, as well as to the language Old English, but it has also long been appropriated to refer to extreme right and racist groups. In his publication 'Antiracist Medievalisms: From "Yellow Peril" to Black Lives Matter', Jonathan Hsy writes that this term 'has deep historical associations with idealized notions of racial purity and discourses of white superiority throughout global anglophone contexts'.[9] Hsy is not alone in arguing this and other scholars have addressed

[8] Reginald Horsman, 'Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain before 1850', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 37. 3 (1976), 387-410.
[9] Jonathan Hsy, *Antiracist Medievalisms: From "Yellow Peril" to Black Lives Matter* (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2021), p. 100.

how the usage of the term is both anachronistic and harmful.[10] In light of these important statements, I will instead consciously refer to 'early medieval England' and the 'early medieval English' people, thereby indicating the various groups of people living in this geographical area during the early medieval period, whilst acknowledging that these terms are not ideal in referring to a specific period and place. The term 'Anglo-Saxon' will still be used in quotations and in bibliographical references. I always use the term Old English to refer to the vernacular language.

Some of the primary sources I use technically fall outside of the parameters of this project: they were conceived in an earlier period or a different location, but they were known, used or adapted in the early medieval period in England and they therefore have a place in this thesis. For example, Augustine of Hippo's work 'De moribus ecclesiae catholicae' was written in Rome in the late fourth century and is thus neither geographically nor chronologically within the scope of early medieval England.[11] Similarly, Isidore of Seville's 'Etymologiae', and 'Differentiae' were written in Seville in the seventh century, and the Roman Anicius Boethius wrote his *Consolation of Philosophy* in the sixth century.[12] However, the works of these authors have been very influential on philosophy and concepts of minds in early medieval England and they are therefore discussed in this thesis. I will give some context on the origin of the primary sources I present throughout the thesis, but in order not to divert from the issues I wish to discuss, this type of information will only be given once. The information given is acquired from scholarly deductions and suppositions presented in modern editions or by the libraries, museums and archives that are in possession of the material. Some of the sources in this thesis are not textual but they are illuminations or material objects, and their images are contained in the appendix of this thesis.

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[10] Adam Miyashiro, 'Decolonizing Anglo-Saxon Studies: A Response to ISAS Honolulu', 2017 <https://www.inthemedievalmiddle.com/2017/07/decolonizing-anglo-saxon-studies.html> [accessed 30 July 2021], Mary Rambaran-Olm, 'Misnaming the Medieval', 2019 <https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/misnaming-the-medieval-rejecting-anglo-saxon-studies> [accessed 30 July 2021].

[11] Consulted: Donald A. Gallagher and Idella, J. Gallagher, *Saint Augustine: The Catholic and Manichaean Ways of Life (de moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus manichaeorum)* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1966). p. xi, and 'De moribus ecclesiae catholicae', Augustine of Hippo, ed. by Migne J.P., *Patrologiae Latinae*, xxxii, (Paris, 1877) pp. 1309-78 (p. 1330).

[12] Consulted: *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville,* ed. by Stephen A. Barney and others (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 9-10., W. M. Lindsay, ed., *Isidore of Seville: Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum libri XX* Tomus I (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911), and M. A. Andrés Sanz, ed., *Liber Differentiarum II,* Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 111a (Brepols, 2006)., *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's De Consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. by Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 3.

While I have selected the information regarding my sources to the best of my abilities, I do not date them or establish their place of origin myself, and I acknowledge that there is a myriad of ways of interpreting the evidence we have that can lead to different conclusions about their creation. A particular example causing such debates is the tenth-century codex Exeter Cathedral Library, MS 3501, or, 'The Exeter Book': an anthology of Old English poems. Several of these poems are discussed in this thesis, such as *Maxims I*, *The Seafarer* and *The Wife's Lament*, and scholars are not certain if these originate from the same period or whether they have been influenced by various sources.[13] I also recognise the value of the debates on their origin, but I only address these when relevant to this thesis and therefore not all will be fully reflected on. In this research project, it is not my primary aim to distinguish dominant schools of thought or concepts of mind by studying origin and audience of texts, but rather to enable the exposure of a range of diverse ideas on minds that were present during this period, but which have been invalidated through other dominant readings. The scholarly editions of the primary texts used are always given in the footnotes of this thesis. I have standardised the spelling of some of the fragments taken from scholarly editions, as editions of texts such as the medical recipes contained in British Library, MS Royal, 12 D 17, known as the 'Leechbooks', edited and translated by Thomas Oswald Cockayne, contain forms of spelling that are no longer used.[14] Diacritics and stress-marks are removed throughout, so that the selected primary text fragments are consistent. I have standardised caesura spacing across all Old English verse quotations. Translations from Old English are generally my own, but I occasionally indicate that they are informed by other scholars' interpretations. Latin translations are sometimes taken from scholarly editions, as indicated in footnotes. A section on some specific translation practices can be found in Chapter 1.3.

[13] Consulted: *The Exeter Book*, ed. by George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1936), pp. xi-xiii.
[14] Consulted: Peter Dendle and Alain Touwaide, eds., *Health and Healing from the Medieval Garden* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008), p. 146., *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England*, ed. by Thomas Oswald Cockayne, Rolls Series, 35, 3, 3 Vols (London: Longman Green, 1864-65).

Chapter 1. Language and Philosophy of Mind: Past and Present

The problem of comparing medieval and modern concepts of mind is rooted in the overall uncertainty of whether a 'mind' actually exists, and if so, in what form it exists. Although we may relate the functioning of the mind to the functioning of the body, we cannot see it. What we experience within our minds is always personal, private, intangible and therefore communicated using linguistic devices such as metaphors. Whatever is expressed about mental experience is thus an echo of someone's reality and is, in a way, itself a translation. These problems of defining the mind and its experiences go somewhat beyond the remit of my study into spheres of philosophical enquiry, but they lie at the heart of every discussion about the mind, and this chapter therefore concerns foundational notions about minds and language to describe them. This chapter consists of three main sections. The first part explores what Western, present-day notions of minds entail, and what language we use to discuss our minds. Much attention will be paid to choices in the selection of modern language used to discuss medieval as well as modern concepts of mind. I discuss how modern notions of health and sickness, and of normality influence our studies of medieval minds, and I consider ways to avoid applying modern categories to medieval concepts.

The second part of this chapter contains an analysis of Old English terminology for 'mind', examined in selected fragments from the Old English wisdom poem, *Maxims I,* and the tenth-century poem *The Battle of Maldon*, both of which exemplify how different potential interpretations of the vocabulary constitute entirely different concepts of mind. The Old English vocabulary is then compared to the Latin vocabulary in order to consider the effect of medieval translations and language choices on interpretation. I consider the influence of the late fourth- and early fifth-century theologian Augustine of Hippo and sixth-century scholar Isidore of Seville on the English Alcuin of York. Alcuin was an advisor at the court of Charlemagne and later abbot of Tours, and he moved in a scholarly circle that discussed and produced influential philosophical works with particular relevance to the present study.[1] Alcuin used a somewhat different application of vocabulary on the mind to these authorities in his writing, prompting questions about dominant concepts of mind in the early medieval period, the influence of scholarship, language, and national boundaries. This comparative approach will help to shed light on the complexities of determining which ideas

[1] John Marenbon, *From the Circle of Alcuin to the School of Auxerre: Logic, Theology, and Philosophy in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 1-2, 30., James Joseph Mark Curry, 'Alcuin, *De ratione animae*: A Text with Introduction, Critical Apparatus, and Translation' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Cornell University, 1966).

about minds were present in the early medieval period, and which ideas we discover because we are influenced by our own notions of the mind and we expect to find them in the past. Awareness of these issues does not eliminate the influence our modern ideas on minds have on our reading of medieval descriptions, but it is an important step in discarding some of the rigid categories we might otherwise apply to a period so different from ours. In the third section of this chapter, I will consider various ways of approaching translation and the usage of language to discuss the mind. It will become evident through my investigations in this chapter, that the richness of the Old English and Latin lexicon and their distinctness signal that a range of diverse concepts existed in the early medieval period, and I attempt to navigate ways of identifying and naming these.

1.1 Modern Vocabulary for Mind

Our understanding of our minds, in present-day Western culture, is undeniably different from early medieval people's concepts of their minds. In this section of the chapter, I will show that modern Western definitions of the mind are rather complex in themselves and that they vary linguistically and culturally. The usage of modern terms and definitions in studies of the mind in early medieval England can therefore potentially lead to misleading classifications of what the primary literature describes. This section will explore some modern notions of minds and the types of language used to describe them, which are particularly influential in the study of medieval minds. I will critique some recent trends in the usage of modern medical terminology and data in order to explain social-historical phenomena, and set out my methodology in response to this. Before returning to concerns about the comparison between the modern brain and the medieval mind, I will discuss the language that we use to write about the mind, and question what concepts it refers to.

Various scholars writing on concepts of minds in early medieval England indicate that, in contrast to the medieval period, the modern Western view of the mind is strongly influenced and dominated by Cartesian philosophy.[2] While traditional Christian dualism would distinguish body and soul, the French philosopher René Descartes' dualism contrasts body and mind.[3] In the seventeenth-century *Discours de la méthode*, Descartes identifies a thinking substance, which is distinct from material things, such as the body. From this

[2] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 4., Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 11., Anna Wierzbicka, 'Soul and Mind: Linguistic Evidence for Ethnopsychology and Cultural History', *American Anthropologist* 91.1 (1989), 41-58.
[3] Wierzbicka, 'Soul and Mind', p. 46.

realisation, he concludes that body and mind must therefore be separate substances.[4] However influential Descartes' theory may be, Anna Wierzbicka's publication 'Soul and Mind' explains that translations of Descartes' philosophy may cause a problematic misunderstanding of his ideas and of what is now perceived as the mind. Over time, the word 'mind' lost its spiritual and emotional connotations and gained focus on the intellect.[5] She demonstrates that *corps* and *âme* in seventeenth-century French do not mean exactly the same as the words *body* and *mind* in modern English.[6] The realisation that these problems exist even in relatively modern translation, makes it easy to imagine that equally, the Modern English word *mind* may not be an appropriate translation for the Old English or Latin words used in the early medieval period to signify the mental faculties.[7] It is even more difficult to imagine whether their pre-Cartesian concepts of mind resemble modern dualist ideas at all. Further, since present-day ideas of the mind become increasingly complex as a result of our knowledge of neuroscience and psychology, those dualist ideas have become even less straightforward in recent decades. I discuss early medieval ideas of dualism and potential corporeality of the mind in the next chapter, but for now, our focus will remain on modern notions of mind.

Anna Wierzbicka further explains that even now, among Western countries, contemporary vocabulary for 'mind' is diverse: '*[m]ind* is an English word, without exact equivalents in French, German, or Latin'.[8] As a native speaker of Dutch, I have found that there is no word at all that means the same as, or provides a good substitute for modern English *mind* in modern Dutch. Modern Dutch might substitute *mind* with *geest*, *psyche*, or *intellect*, or refer to the locus of mental activity: the brain. These terms all have equivalents in English and none of them mean exactly what is signified by *mind*.[9] How will we know if I understand the modern concept of 'mind' in the same way as native speakers of English, let

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[4] René Descartes, *A Discourse on the Method: On Correctly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences*, trans. by Ian Maclean (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 32-33, 39.
[5] Wierzbicka, 'Soul and Mind', p. 49.
[6] Wierzbicka, 'Soul and Mind', p. 47.
[7] Soon-Ai Low, 'Approaches to the Old English Vocabulary for "Mind"', *Studia Neophilologica*, 73.1 (2001), 11-22 (p. 11), Anna Wierzbicka, *Semantics, Culture and Cognition: Universal Human Concepts in Culture-Specific Configurations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 41.
[8] Wierzbicka, 'Soul and Mind' p. 47.
[9] 'geest' *Cambridge Dictionary Online* <https://dictionary.cambridge.org> [accessed 1 March 2019]:
spirit [noun] a person's mind, will, personality etc thought of as distinct from the body, or as remaining alive eg as a ghost when the body dies
'psyche' *Cambridge Dictionary Online* <https://dictionary.cambridge.org> [accessed 1 March 2019]: [noun] the mind, or the deepest thoughts, feelings, or beliefs of a person or group
'intellect' *Cambridge Dictionary Online* <https://dictionary.cambridge.org> [accessed 1 March 2019]:
intellect [noun] the thinking power of the mind

alone if I understand the early medieval concept of mind well enough to describe it in modern language? Did early medieval people have a concept that corresponds to the Modern English *mind*, if even a contemporary neighbouring country does not? Etymologically, Dutch and English have many words in common, and the Old English word used most frequently to describe the mind, *mod*, still appears in both languages; *moed* and *gemoed* in Dutch, and *mood* in English.[10] Old Dutch *gest*; Old English *gast* appears as Modern Dutch *geest* and Modern English *ghost*. Modern English *mind* comes from Old English *gemynd*, meaning both mind and memory.[11] This etymological comparison shows that various similar languages use terms with different shades of meaning. Thus, denotations and connotations of words have changed and become hard to recover. Latin falls somewhat outside this category of comparison, as it has a much more distant linguistic relationship with Old English and modern Germanic languages. Latin *mens* seems to be the term most closely associated with OE *mod* and *gemynd*, and is used by early medieval people to translate these. Early medieval terms such as *mod*, *gast* and *gemynd* and their applications have changed over time. When there are seemingly strong linguistic associations between modern and medieval vocabulary, it can be tempting to substitute one for the other in translation without fully considering their potentially different connotations. This leads to the risk that modern views of the mind come to dominate research into other cultures or historical periods through the associations carried by vocabulary.

It is important to acknowledge that the definition for the modern English term 'mind' is not unambiguous, when making a comparison between modern and medieval definitions of mind. This is an example of one of many definitions for the concept of 'mind' in contemporary Anglophone culture, found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*:

> Mind: IV Mental or psychic faculty.
> […]
> (a) The seat of awareness, thought, volition, feeling, and memory; cognitive and emotional phenomena and powers considered as constituting a presiding influence; the mental faculty of a human being (esp. as regarded as being separate from the physical); (occasionally) this whole system as constituting a person's character or individuality.[12]

[10] 'mood, n.1.' *Oxford English Dictionary Online* <http://www.oed.com/> [accessed 1 March 2019]
[11] 'mind, n.1.' *OED Online* <http://www.oed.com/> [accessed 1 March 2019]
[12] Ibid.

The Oxford English Dictionary offers a definition of how the word *mind* is used and this does not quite adhere to the philosophy of Descartes' mind-body dualism. Rather, this definition also seems to make a distinction between *mind*, *mental* and *psychic* that suggests the mind can belong to either of these faculties, and it can also *be* either of these faculties. Furthermore, this definition encompasses elements that seem conflicting, such as the introduction of the mind as mental *or* psychic faculty. The dictionary's definition of *mind*, then, is complex and unclear, and this represents our difficulty defining this term. Although alternative terms, such as *consciousness* or *the psyche*, are available to us, most prominent scholars who study representations and perceptions of the early medieval mind, such as Godden, Lockett and Harbus, do prefer to use the modern term *mind* to substitute a wide range of Old English terms for mind, which will be discussed shortly.

The term *mind* is very comprehensive and seems to signify a faculty that is neither body nor soul. This lexical flexibility of *mind* prompts questions about its frequent usage by modern scholarship: does the application of the term *mind* simply offer a broad definition that will suit different kinds of concept, or does it signify an attempt to fit early medieval thought in a modern mould? Does the usage of Modern English terms such as *mind* impair our understanding of the full meaning of Latin and Old English words for mind, used in a context that is so completely different from ours? Antonina Harbus answers this question by recommending that we suspend our own understanding of the mind while trying to understand a different schema.[13] Although the idea of having an open mind is particularly appropriate for this endeavour, our modern knowledge of cognition and the vocabulary we use are likely to influence our perception of minds to some extent. Like Harbus, Britt Mize equally advises not to attempt an over-precise definition of the mind when examining early medieval representations of minds.[14] Is it enough to acknowledge that the word *mind* is not a perfect translation for the terms used by early medieval people for their concept of mind? Naturally, if we keep our modern concept of the mind undefined, it will be a better match for whatever concept medieval people had, but it will also mean that both will be vague, and neither similarity, nor difference in concepts can be distinguished in this way.

Much of the existing research on early medieval minds is influenced by modern medical, anatomical and psychological views of the mind, informed by current developments

[13] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 10.
[14] Britt Mize, 'The Representation of the Mind as an Enclosure in Old English poetry', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 35 (2006), 57-90 (p. 58).

in those respective fields.[15] In order to shed light on how minds functioned, or how they were thought to function in various periods in history, scholarship has been taking increasingly interdisciplinary approaches, thereby allowing an even broader range of subject-specific terminology to be applied. Examples of such disciplines are philosophy, psychology, anthropology and even neuroscience, which scholars in the humanities have engaged with to a great extent in recent years. This has led to fascinating and informative publications such as Antonina Harbus' *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry*, Chiara Ambrosio and William Maclehose's *Imagining the Brain: Episodes in the History of Brain Research*, and Juliana Dresvina and Victoria Blud's volume *Cognitive Sciences and Medieval Studies*.[16] In such publications, various approaches are set out that unite distinct disciplinary backgrounds and methodologies by the application of present-day knowledge of biology to the medieval period.[17] While many of these projects contribute new insights to the field of medieval studies, the language used to describe the (functioning of) minds is often far removed from what is described in the primary sources. For example, the usage of terms like *brain*; an organ that only infrequently represents ideas related to the early medieval concept of mind, as I will show in Chapter 2, can lead to complex and problematic studies.[18]

The usage of specific modern definitions and precise terminology for (parts of) the mind and its functions has a range of potential consequences. One of these is the possibility that modern associations of health and illness, normality and non-normativity are applied to descriptions in the source material that do not necessarily adhere to these binary definitions. It thus either presumes that a similar concept of mind to ours is present in early medieval sources and emphasises this. However, there are several benefits to using this type of terminology. A range of terms can readily be applied to the sphere of medieval studies from the fields of biology, medicine and psychology, where clear language points to exactly the physiological part or pathological phenomenon that needs to be discussed. Studies and statistics from these fields are accessible to scholars in the humanities, who can use these to make their own research more precise and quantifiable. Yet, in some cases, modern medical

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[15] See for example Nadia Pawelchak, 'Medieval Art History and Neuroscience: An Introduction', in *Cognitive Sciences and Medieval Studies*, ed. by Juliana Dresvina and Victoria Blud (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020), pp. 199-216.

[16] Antonina Harbus, *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)., Chiara Ambrosio and William MacLehose, eds., *Imagining the Brain: Episodes in the History of Brain Research* Vol. 243 (Cambridge, MA: Elsevier, 2018)., Juliana Dresvina and Victoria Blud, eds., *Cognitive Sciences and Medieval Studies: An Introduction* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020).

[17] For definitions for terms such as 'cognitive psychology' or 'cognitive neuroscience', please see Dresvina and Blud, *Cognitive Sciences and Medieval Studies*, pp. 1-8.

[18] See Chapter 2.3 The Location of the Mind.

language appears to be rather used as a present-minded approach. For example, Peter Dendle uses the tools and methods of modern science to examine the medieval mind in such a way that assumes a transferability of insights between the two that is perhaps not as straightforward as he argues. Dendle describes in his work on demon possession how,

> [a] broken bone was not a different physiological event for an Anglo-Saxon than it is for a modern English person, however different the individual experience or contemporary cultural interpretation of it. […] The brain is also capable of being "broken" in certain recognisable ways that sometimes transcend cultural boundaries.[19]

The brain, however, is generally not what early medieval English people refer to when they discuss their minds, and this disparity between the concepts complicates this analogy significantly. Dendle continues to state that,

> [he will not include] an extensive methodological defence of using modern constructs to interpret England's medical past, any more than archaeologists defend the use of meters in describing a medieval site, or any more than literary theorists deploy modern categories such as "masculinity," "hegemony," or "meta-text" in understanding medieval texts.[20]

While Dendle perhaps aims to use clear modern language to discuss concepts that may be unfamiliar to a modern reader, it is difficult to know if this type of language can accurately match early medieval concepts of demon possession. The comparisons he makes to the type of language used in modern fields are perhaps not comprehensive in reflecting the complexities of studying medieval minds. An archaeologist might use meters, but this measurement does not affect modern, nor medieval cultural concepts. Even so, it is not uncommon for historians or archaeologists to include medieval measurements for comparative purposes. The literary categories mentioned by Dendle do reflect cultural concepts, and theorists applying them generally do define or justify their usage in their works, in order to provide clarity. And finally, the term masculinity is by medievalists invariably defined and discussed in order to examine medieval, not modern concepts.[21] A

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[19] Dendle, *Demon Possession,* p. xv.
[20] Ibid.
[21] See for example, Clare A. Lees, Thelma Fenster and Jo Ann McNamara, eds., *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages*, Medieval Cultures 7 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

methodological defence is thus not at all uncommon in those areas of study, and could certainly be expected in the examination of England's medical past. While Dendle's approach of using modern constructs and terminology regarding the brain may give us modern explanations of phenomena in the past, it will not help us understand the way medieval people perceived and explained their own experiences. Instead, it rather pathologises mental and physical events that were perhaps not perceived as an illness in the way we would understand it today.[22]

Specific modern medical language selected to discuss medieval concepts of mind can thus lead to modern medical explanations for descriptions in the past. Matthew Rampley addresses scholarly approaches that concentrate on modern, rather than medieval concepts and definitions. Rampley discusses the risks of introducing neuroscientific data to the field of medieval studies. He refers, like William Uttal's work does, to the archaic skull-measuring technique, 'phrenology', as a lesson in applying 'descriptive data from one domain of knowledge […] to make normative claims in another' and he further compares this to some modern neuroscientific methods that have been utilised in the study of art and culture.[23] The implication here is that just like measurements from a skull were once believed to reveal characteristics of a person's mind, neuroscientific data are sometimes taken out of context, misinterpreted or are in itself simply not substantial enough to be used to draw conclusions about mental functioning. Rampley explains that some of the problems that can arise in research projects, especially when carried out by scholars who are not neuroscientists, are difficulties interpreting fMRI data and oversimplification or even exaggeration of the properties of 'mirror neurons', leading to unsound claims about the brain, which are then applied to a historic period.[24] Even when data are interpreted correctly and appropriate claims are made, the suitability of comparing this to historical periods without fMRI technology, where all evidence of mental experiences comes from written testimonies and archaeological findings, needs to be questioned. Rampley explains that the ambition to study historical periods through this lens of anatomy is rooted in the desire to find universal traits in human brains that explain their behaviour, throughout time: '[n]eurohumanities research is an attempt to take that notion of universality seriously, grounding the understanding of cultural

[22] See Chapter 3.2, 'Minds in Adulthood: Temporary States' for a further discussion of illnesses described in the medieval medical books.
[23] Matthew Rampley, 'Questions of Value: Brain Science, Aesthetics and Art in the Neurohumanities', in *Cognitive Sciences and Medieval Studies*, ed. by Juliana Dresvina and Victoria Blud (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020), pp. 59-82 (p. 59)., William R. Uttal, *The New Phrenology: The Limits of Localizing Cognitive Processes in the Brain* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).
[24] Rampley, pp. 62, 65, 70.

practices in an understanding of human biology'.[25] Although Rampley's warnings should, in my opinion, be taken very seriously in our field, they also raise a more fundamental problem: it is difficult to estimate where the neurohumanities end and the humanities begin. As I have already shown, even by using modern language such as the term *mind*, it is possible that we are already applying anachronistic neuro-human notions to some extent. The aim of this research project is not to explain what took place in early medieval minds according to modern medical knowledge, but to learn what early medieval people thought their minds consisted of and were capable of. While the term *mind* is at least linguistically related to, and compatible with a concept of mind that may have existed in the early medieval period, a significant amount of the language and concepts used in medicine and neuroscience, such as particular medical diagnoses and terms such as 'mirror-neurons', are not. In this project I will therefore largely avoid modern medical definitions, particularly when they relate to the brain.

While I recognise the potential problems flagged by Rampley in the field of neurohumanities, there are also discernible advantages in the comparison of modern ideas of minds with those of the past. Not only is it unavoidable that a certain part of the language and ideas we use to discuss medieval minds derive from our own concept of mind, it can work to our advantage. I will guide us through many early medieval ideas on minds in this thesis and in order for us to understand their meaning to the best of our ability, I will occasionally refer to modern concepts of minds which I believe hold similarities to those in the primary sources. I acknowledge that these concepts are different from each other and derive from different sources of knowledge, but they may give us insight in, and help us gain familiarity with ideas that could otherwise appear alien to us. Examples of such concepts are the travelling minds and non-human minds I will discuss in Chapter 4. For this purpose I will refer to modern concepts of distributed cognition, and in particular to extended mind theory, a modern theory that explains that cognition consists and functions not only in the brain, but also in the body and the body's environment.[26] I will use these theories because I think they reflect or resemble phenomena observable in medieval sources. Extended mind theory is incorporated

[25] Ibid., p. 75.
[26] John Sutton, 'Exograms and Interdisciplinarity: History, the Extended Mind, and the Civilising Process', in *The extended mind*, ed. by Richard Menary (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), pp. 189-226., Merlin Donald, *Origins of the Modern Mind: Three Stages in the Evolution of Culture and Cognition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991)., Victoria Blud, 'Making up a Mind: 4E Cognition and the Medieval Subject', in *Cognitive Sciences and Medieval Studies*, ed. by Juliana Dresvina and Victoria Blud (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020), pp. 163-82 (p. 163).

in the theory, or rather, various theories of '4E cognition', which brings together Embodied, Embedded, Enacted and Extended cognition;

> Cognitive activity involves not only the brain but somatic feedback from the body more generally; it is also thoroughly linked with environmental data and conditions, involving not only reaction to stimuli but proactive input, and 'extends' from the organism into the wider environment.[27]

Victoria Blud makes a case for the consideration of cognitive processes in the middle ages to function in this way, and lists the advantages of viewing them through this lens. While I expressed a recommendation of caution regarding the application or comparison of modern to medieval theories of mind, what is achieved by a model such as 4E cognition is in some ways the opposite of applying modern neuro-scientific data or medical diagnoses to medieval brains. Instead, this model allows for cognition to exist in more than the brain, collaborating with, and reacting to environment and circumstance; a pattern I will pay attention to in Chapter 4.[28] Blud argues that, 'the embodied cognition approach avoids the temptations of retroactive diagnosis, in which accounts of religious experience, for example, become intelligible to modern psychology only as instances of mental illness or psychological disorder'.[29] Approaches such as these do not classify or categorise medieval descriptions of minds using modern medical terms, but instead suggest that several environmental factors can play a role in the representation of a mind or cognitive process.

Certain scholarly decisions in the selection of language that is used can lead to a neglect of medieval experiences, while on the other hand, some modern theories can clarify and magnify described medieval phenomena. The usage of modern diagnoses to explain descriptions of symptoms or behaviour in the past, means risking misinterpretation or pathologising phenomena that were not considered to be an illness. For example, the phenomenon that is in the primary literature described to affect people who then become 'witleas', or witless, will be discussed in Chapter 3; this appears to be a state of mind that was especially considered to affect pregnant women.[30] Although various modern medical explanations can be given for a woman's mind to be affected during the course of her

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[27] Blud, p. 163., Also see Andy Clark, *Supersizing the Mind: Embodied, Action, and Cognitive Extension* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018)., Richard Menary, 'Introduction to the special issue on 4E cognition', *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 9.4 (2010), 459-63., Albert Newen, Leon de Bruin and Sean Gallagher, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of 4E Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
[28] See Chapter 4.1, 'The Extended Human Mind'.
[29] Blud, p. 176.
[30] See Chapter 3.2, 'Minds in Adulthood: Temporary States'.

pregnancy, it is not my purpose to analyse how we would diagnose a woman with such symptoms today, but to examine what the term 'witless' and the behaviour associated with it meant to a contemporary audience in the context of early medieval concepts of mind. Understandably, not all scholars take the same approach; some attempt to broaden our understanding of what is described in the primary sources precisely by drawing comparisons with modern medicine. For example, Dendle compares early medieval descriptions of demon possession to illnesses such as epilepsy, post-traumatic stress disorder and Tourette's syndrome.[31] His methods are thus different from mine, but his analysis of modern medical knowledge and diagnoses, as well as a sensitivity to cultural contexts, leads to an impressive body of work on medieval concepts of demon possession that were previously not easily understood. Wendy Turner refers to modern medicine as well but she introduces the concept of 'parallel diagnoses' to late medieval descriptions of problematic experiences relating to the mind.[32] While her approach enables us to see similarities between those experiences and ours, providing a modern explanation also obscures potential alternative significance of those source descriptions. The suitability of the usage of modern medical diagnoses to explain descriptions of experiences of the mind in the past therefore depends somewhat on the aims of the research project. Sally Crawford and Christina Lee describe the phenomenon of mental illness in the past as a social construct that depends on ideas of acceptability and state that,

> [e]ven with a modern medical knowledge-base, it is not entirely clear whether mental illnesses fall into the category of diseases (which can be remedied by giving medicine) or of problems of individual socialisation and perception, which might be remedied by counselling and therapy.[33]

Unless we can be quite certain of what type of situation we are analysing, the application of language that pathologises is not always appropriate.

Before ending this section on choices in usage of modern language, which has unearthed rather a lot of potential problems in describing perceived medieval experiences, I wish to consider a last reason that adds to the complexity, and perhaps undesirability, of using modern medical language for — often rather extreme — cases of non-normative

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[31] Dendle, *Demon Possession*, pp. 7, 198-99.
[32] Wendy J. Turner, 'Medieval English Understanding of Mental Illness and Parellel Diagnosis to Contemporary Neuroscience', in *Cognitive Sciences and Medieval Studies*, ed. by Juliana Dresvina and Victoria Blud (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020), pp. 97-120.
[33] Sally Crawford and Christina Lee, eds. *Bodies of Knowledge: Cultural Interpretations of Illness and Medicine in Medieval Europe*, BAR International Series 2170 (Oxford: Archeopress, 2010), p. 1.

descriptions of minds and behaviour in the past. Research into different periods and cultures can show us how perceptions of mental health and normality change over time and in various regions. Yet comparisons focusing on similarities or even on universality of minds, using modern western diagnoses, have the potential to negatively affect present-day perception of mental health and illness. As well as depicting the symptoms we recognise as those of a certain modern mental illness, medieval texts may describe the same patient to display symptoms that are unusual or outlandish to us, or describe a person to act in extreme ways. Studies that interpret medieval descriptions of demon possession or lunacy as symptoms of present-day mental illnesses, risk contributing negative associations to those modern diagnoses. While recognition of described symptoms in primary sources can suggest or even help to confirm that a particular condition has existed for a longer period of time, cultural context is inseparable from these symptoms. Stigmatisation and exclusion of people with mental health issues is not uncommon in present-day society, and by extending modern diagnoses to include what can be shocking or alienating medieval descriptions, without taking their cultural significance into account, we risk contributing to stereotypes affecting people today.

The choices scholars make in their usage of Modern English vocabulary when discussing early medieval minds influence the way medieval concepts are perceived. This becomes evident when looking at the key word representing the topic of this thesis: *mind*. The word *mind* is unlikely to reflect the same connotations and denotations as words such as *mod*, and it is even unlikely to reflect similar concepts in other related modern languages. This problem with selecting appropriate vocabulary does not only lie in the words chosen for translation purposes but also in our analyses and discussions of early medieval concepts. I have paid elaborate attention to modern medical language used to describe the mind and its functioning, and the effect it can have when applied to ideas from the past. I argued that using modern medical language and pathologising language to discuss primary source descriptions of mind can mean that contextual implications from those sources are neglected. For projects such as these, this context is essential in furthering our understanding of early medieval perceptions of minds. While I therefore largely avoid the usage of specific modern medical or anatomical language in this thesis, I will demonstrate in Chapter 4 that the application of specific modern concepts regarding cognition, can be a worthwhile instrument of

comparison.[34] I will return to the subject of modern language in section 1.3 of this chapter to discuss translation choices, but first I will examine early medieval language for *mind*.

1.2 Latin and Old English Vocabulary for Mind

The vocabulary for *mind* that was used in the primary sources can tell us about the values ascribed to concepts of mind. The variety of these terms in the lexicon and the frequency of the usage of certain words, especially in Old English, constitute substantial evidence for how early medieval people understood their minds. Scholarship has devoted much attention to the Old English vocabulary for the mind, which I will discuss shortly, yet the Latin lexicon has not received the same treatment. Partly this may be the result of Latin having a limited number of terms denoting the mind in comparison to Old English, and some of these terms have a range of meanings that are defined in the original texts. In contrast, Old English vocabulary for mind is very extensive, polysemous, and it lends itself to endless variation through the formation of compounds. This section of the chapter will examine terms for *mind* in both Latin and Old English in various early medieval texts, as well as through dictionaries and the *Thesaurus of Old English*.

The Latin lexicon can be used to contrast the Old English lexicon, and early medieval translation can be compared with Latin source texts in order to discern what the vernacular terms exactly denote. Malcolm R. Godden shows, for example, how certain choices in the vernacular translation of Boethius' *De consolatione philosophiae* reveal the existence of a different model of the mind in early medieval culture.[35] The Roman senator Boethius wrote this text while imprisoned by Ostrogoths, in the early sixth century, and *De consolatione philosophiae* became influential throughout the Carolingian empire.[36] Boethius uses *mens*, *animus*, and *cor* to signify the centre of human consciousness, or what we may call *mind*, and the soul is referred to as *anima*.[37] The Old English *Boethius*, found in a late ninth- or early tenth-century manuscript was for a long time attributed by scholarship to King Alfred the Great, but it is now argued that it was probably produced in an ecclesiastical centre such as

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[34] See Chapter 4.1, 'The Extended Human Mind'.
[35] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind'.
[36] *The Old English Boethius*, Vol. 1, p. 3.
[37] 'mens' *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* < http://clt.brepolis.net/dmlbs/> [accessed 1 February 2019]: 1.a seat or organ of intellectual activity, the mind. b (dist. from *corpus* or sim.). c (as personified agent).
'animus' *DMLBS:* 1 mind or heart (source of thought, feeling and will). b character. c courage. d pride. e purpose. f animosity.
'cor' *DMLBS*: 1 heart (as bodily organ), 2 (sts. pl.) heart as seat of personality or conscious activity a (of feeling, disposition, or sim). b (of determination or courage). c (of thought or memory). d (w. *redire* or *revertere*) true self, 'right mind'.

Canterbury or Glastonbury.[38] This version of the text translates *mens* and *cor* with *sawl*[39], and 'seems to treat mind (mod) and soul (sawl) as very closely related concepts'.[40] The vocabulary has changed because the language has changed, but the translation also shows different associations and connotations for the mind, suggesting a different conceptualisation on the part of the translator, which they overlay onto the Latin original.

A strong connection between terms for mind and terms for soul becomes evident in usage of Latin vocabulary in certain influential early medieval works. In Leslie Lockett's important work *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies in the Vernacular and Latin Traditions*, she looks at a wide spectrum of Latin texts in early medieval England and the sources they derive from. Lockett identifies Isidore of Seville's seventh-century *Differentiae*, which contains definitions on the differences of things and the language used for them, as an influential text on early medieval scholars such as Alcuin of York and Ælfric of Eynsham. She explains the variation in Latin vocabulary for the mind or soul with this example from Isidore, in which one single unitary soul can have different names when it is occupied in different actions:[41]

> Quae dum contemplatur, spiritus est; dum sentit, sensus est; dum sapit, animus est; dum intellegit, mens est; dum discernit, ratio est; dum consentit, uoluntas est; dum recordatur, memoria est; dum membra uegetat, anima est.[42]
>
> When it contemplates, it is *spiritus*; when it feels, it is *sensus*; when it knows, it is *animus*; when it apprehends with the intellect, it is *mens*; when it discerns, it is *ratio*; when it consents, it is *voluntas*; when it remembers, it is *memoria*; and when it vivifies the limbs, it is *anima*.[43]

The recurring *dum* signals the changing condition that the soul must be in, in order to be called by a certain name.[44] In *Differentiae*, it therefore seems that all of the terms for mental faculties in fact signify a specific state or function of the soul. Multiplicity and contingency are, seemingly paradoxically for the modern mind, at the core of this vision of the unitary soul, and all these terms signify both soul, *and* one of its qualities. Instead of a single word

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[38] *The Old English Boethius*, Vol. 1, p. 5
[39] 'sawel' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. by Joseph Bosworth and Thomas Northcote Toller, Christ Sean, and Ondřej Tichy. Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University, 2014. <https://bosworthtoller.com> [accessed 1 February 2018]: The soul.
[40] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 275.
[41] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 206.
[42] Isidore of Seville, 'Differentiae 2.27', *Liber Differentiarum II*, p. 61.
[43] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 206.
[44] 'dum' *DMLBS*: 2. While (during or at the time), when (for as long [as]).

for *mind*, which is removed from any connection with the soul, this fragment from Isidore shows that his use of Latin only contains terms that signify the soul in a particular state, which is always contingent on circumstances and provisional.

Certain choices in adaptations of influential works by the early medieval English scholar Alcuin of York, convey a slightly different concept of mind than his sources. James Curry identifies Isidore as a great influence on Alcuin, and observes that guiding notions from the *Differentiae* are discernible in *De ratione animae,* which was written in the early ninth century.[45] Alcuin largely follows the same definitions as Isidore but he additionally presents a different application of the listed terms:

> Si enim Deus est summum Dominis bonum (quod negari non potest) sequitur quoniam summum bonum appetere est bene vivere ut nihil aliud sit bene vivere quam toto corde tota anima tota mente diligere Deum a quo existit.[46]
>
> For if God is man's highest good (which cannot be denied) it follows that, since to live well is to seek the highest good, to live well means nothing other than to love, with our whole heart, whole soul, and whole mind, God, from whom they spring.[47]

Alcuin separates *cor, anima* and *mens* as entities that can all be engaged together in the act of loving God. *Existit* implies grammatically that heart, soul and mind are one, yet they are mentioned separately. The mind was clearly listed by Isidore as one of several states of the soul; namely, when it apprehends with the intellect, and therefore it would have sufficed to state that God can be loved with the soul. It appears that Alcuin has taken some of these notions almost literally from Augustine's *De moribus ecclesiae*:

> Si enim Deus est summum hominis bonum, quod negare non potestis, sequitur profecto, quoniam summum bonum appetere, est bene vivere, ut nihil sit aliud bene vivere, quam toto corde, tota anima, tota mente Deum diligere: a quo existit […].[48]
>
> For if God is man's highest good, which you cannot deny, it logically follows, since to live well is to seek the highest good, that to live well means nothing

[45] 'Alcuin, *De ratione animae'*, pp. 1, 6.
[46] 'Alcuin*, De ratione animae',* p. 43, ll. 3-7.
[47] Unattributed translations are my own, see discussion of translation practice below.
[48] Augustine of Hippo 'De moribus ecclesiae XXV.46' *Patrologiae Latinae,* p. 1331.

> other than to love, with our whole heart, our whole soul, with the whole mind,
> God, from whom they spring.

Augustine refers here to the mind and heart separately from the soul, thereby giving them prominence while leaving out other conditions, and Alcuin leaves this distinction in his work. While Isidore of Seville is of great influence in the rest of his work, we see that Alcuin applies the terms *corde, anima* and *mente* slightly differently than Isidore. Thus, these examples demonstrate that Isidore and Augustine made different choices in defining their vocabulary, but this was not considered an impediment by Alcuin, who used both as his sources. The combination of Isidore and Augustine's philosophies on Alcuin's work is visible, neither of which is significantly altered or consolidated into a more harmonious new text. Instead, the conflicting notions that Alcuin preserves indicate that for himself and his audience, there was a possibility of contemplating more than one notion about minds in one text, and that the terms used applied to not one concept of mind, but to several.

The Old English vocabulary for mind is much broader than the Latin, and provides insight into a different concept of mind, which is removed from the concept of the soul. While the Old English *Boethius* contained suggestions in its translation from Latin that mind and soul were treated as closely related concepts, various other Old English texts seem to portray the opposite. *Maxims I*, a poem containing statements of what appears to be commonly accepted wisdom, found in the tenth-century Exeter Book, opens with a rich display of diverse vocabulary referring to the mind:

> Frige mec frodum wordum! Ne læt þinne ferð onhælne,
> degol þæt þu deopost cunne! Nelle ic þe min dyrne gesecgan,
> gif þu me þinne hygecræft hylest ond þine heortan geþohtas.
> Gleawe men sceolon gieddum wrixlan.[49]

> Question me with wise words! Do not let your *ferð*[50] be hidden,
> your deepest knowledge be secret! I will not tell you my secrets,
> if you hide your *hygecræft*[51] and your *heortan*[52] thoughts from me.
> Wise men shall exchange maxims.

[49] 'Maxims I', *The Exeter Book*, pp. 156-57, ll. 1-4.
[50] 'ferþ' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: I. the soul, spirit, mind. II. life.
[51] 'hyge-cræft' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: mental power, intellect, wisdom.
[52] 'heorte' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the heart.

This opening entices the reader to reveal their knowledge, but also their *ferð, hygecræft,* and *heortan* thoughts, in exchange for the narrator's wisdom. These Old English terms have a range of potential meanings referring to, for example, the mind, soul, heart and wisdom. Antonina Harbus considers this opening a way of establishing the conditions under which wisdom may be exchanged.[53] Wisdom indeed has a role in this description but what this opening mostly does is centralise the mind and its properties. The passage distinguishes itself stylistically from the other advice that is given in the maxims. It does so through the usage of direct address, and the absence of the otherwise frequently used *bið*[54] and *sceal,*[55] emphasising the way things are or should be, in lines 1-3. This passage does not only give advice or explain a tradition regarding the exchange of wisdom; it requires a transaction based on the notion that minds can hide and reveal their content. Through this opening, the mind becomes the primary subject of the poem. It is asserted that the mind in *Maxims I* is viewed as contingent on a person or circumstance, and its content is negotiable. Moreover, this fragment demonstrates how extensive and versatile the Old English lexicon for the mind and its properties is. We can speculate what terms such as *ferð* and *hyge*[56] signify; in the context of these lines it seems that their meanings might be distinct, whereas their dictionary definitions render them near-synonyms. I have given *Bosworth and Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*'s definitions of Old English *ferð* and *hygecræft* as they appear in *Maxims I* in the footnotes. The reason that I have not translated them is that *ferð* and *hyge* are closely related terms and they both carry a range of potential meanings which I do not want to limit by choosing one. A full discussion of my approach to translation can be found in section 1.3 below. In addition to *ferð* and *hyge*, *Maxims I* also includes a term that is by far the most frequently used for mind: *mod*.[57] Whereas Godden suggests that *mod, hyge, sefa* and *ferð* were 'used more or less interchangeably', the usage of this variety of terms for the mind opens up the possibility that they must denote distinct aspects of it, perhaps in a way similar to their Latin equivalents.[58] However, there have also been studies that argue *mod, hyge, sefa* and *ferð* are faculties that are separate from each other or have separate qualities.[59]

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[53] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind,* p. 79.
[54] 'beon' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: to be, exist, become.
[55] 'sculan' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: denoting obligation or constraint of various kinds, shall, must, ought.
[56] 'hyge' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Mind, heart, soul.
[57] 'mod' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: I. a. Mind, b. soul, heart, spirit, mind, disposition, mood. II a. Courage, high spirit, b. Pride, arrogance, III. Greatness, magnificence, pride.
[58] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 289.
[59] Michael Joseph Philips, *Heart, Mind, and Soul in Old English: A Semantic Study* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois, 1985)., Richard North, *Pagan Words and Christian Meanings*, Costerus New Series 31

The lexicon selected by *A Thesaurus of Old English* may shed a light on synonymy and categorisation. The *Thesaurus* lists under 'Mental Faculties', 'Spirit, soul, heart: *ferhþ, heorte, heortscræf, hreþer, lichord, mod, modsefa, sawol*'; which is a very restricted selection of an extensive lexicon.[60] Soon-Ai Low comments on the peculiar combination of terms in the *Thesaurus* and observes that, while this list leaves out principal terms such as *sefa* and *hyge*, it does contain compounds made up of the aforementioned elements.[61] This choice is, somewhat surprisingly, justified by the *Thesaurus* as a way to 'add spice to' the grouped words – a dubious explanation that leaves us with an inaccurate representation of the range of vocabulary for mind.[62] Low's suggestions to rearrange these words into different categories, such as *hreþer*[63] and *heorte* in 'parts of the body, associated with the mind or consciousness' or *gast* and *sawol* 'as words that denote a spiritual rather than a psychological entity', brings on different problems, as many terms would appear in more than one category.[64] Low lists these as 'middle terms', and she traces the appearance of some of these throughout a great number of Old English texts, which shows the complexity of words like *ingehygd*,[65] *ingeþonc*,[66] *andgit*,[67] and *gemynd*[68] in context. The polysemousness of certain terms, such as *mod*, which can mean both 'mind,' and 'courage,' leads her to conclude that we must speak of 'tendencies to mean' instead of 'definitions' because these terms have unpredictable nuances.[69] Again, as I discussed in the section on modern language for mind, this shows an inclination in scholarship not to give a precise definition of a medieval concept, leaving both modern and medieval terms for, and concepts of mind rather undefined.

Through its wide connotative range, *mod* can be interpreted as the seat of thought, as well as the seat of memory, of disposition, of emotion and of resolution.[70] *The Battle of*

(Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991). For a discussion of these see Soon-Ai Low, *The Anglo-Saxon Mind: Metaphor and Common Sense Psychology in Old English Literature* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, 1998), p. 20., Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, pp. 35-36., and Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 34.

[60] ' Mental Faculties' *A Thesaurus of Old English* ed. by Jane Roberts, Christian J. Kay and Lynne Grundy, (Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 2019), pp. 356-403.

[61] Low, *The Anglo-Saxon Mind*, p. 1.

[62] 'Mental Faculties' *A Thesaurus of Old English*, pp. 356-403, xxviii.

[63] 'hreþer' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Breast, bosom.

[64] Low, *The Anglo-Saxon Mind*, pp. 3, 5.

[65] 'ingehygd' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Thought, mind, intent, sense, knowledge, understanding, conscience, intention, purpose.

[66] 'ingeþanc' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: The seat of thought, intellect, mind, heart, spirit, breast.

[67] 'andgit' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the understanding, the intellect.

[68] 'gemynd' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: mind, memory, memorial, memento, remembrance, commemoration., Low, *the Anglo-Saxon Mind*, pp. 8-15.

[69] Low, *The Anglo-Saxon Mind*, p. 25.

[70] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 41.

Maldon offers an illustration of this adaptability of *mod* as well as for the term *hige*, which appears to behave in a similar way:

> Hige sceal þe heardra, heorte þe cenre
> mod sceal þe mare, þe ure mægan lytlað.[71]
>
> The *hige* must be harder, the *heorte* the bolder,
> the *mod* must be greater, as our strength decreases.

Using the same style as *Maxims I*, with its gnomic *sceal*, this poem describes the application of the *hige*, *heorte* and *mod*. Translations of this passage, however, often look somewhat like this by Bradley:

> Resolution must be the tougher, hearts the keener,
> Courage must be the more as our strength grows less.[72]

Hige and *mod* do not represent the mind as an entity in this translation, but instead they take on a quality of mind: resolution and courage. John Highfield suggests that there may be variation in usage of vocabulary based on genre and theme. He groups a number of poems with primarily secular themes and makes a case for the connection of *mod* and aristocratic class.[73] An example given is that in *Beowulf*, Hrothgar conceives in his *mod* (him on mod bearn 67-72) the idea to build a mead hall for *modig* men.[74] Highfield holds that not 'all thoughts are generated in the mod, but […] this was a particularly aristocratic conception', and that similarly, his *modgeþonc* (line 1729), is only related to his *mod* 'because it concerns […] warrior-like matters'.[75] Nonetheless, *mod* and *modgeþonc* do occur frequently in contexts that are unrelated to warrior-like matters. An example is the *mod* of the woman in *The Wife's Lament*, for whom Highfield does not give a comprehensive explanation.[76] Highfield is aware of further exceptions, and verifies these as occurrences outside of secular poetry.[77] Furthermore, in the fragment quoted from *The Battle of Maldon*, *mod* seems to me

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[71] *The Battle of Maldon*, ed. by D. G. Scragg (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), p. 67, ll. 312-13.
[72] 'The Battle of Maldon', in *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, ed. by Sidney A. J. Bradley (London: Everyman, 1995), p. 527.
[73] John Highfield, '*Mod* in the Old English "Secular" Poetry: An Indicator of Aristocratic Class', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 79.3 (1997), 79-92 (p. 81).
[74] Highfield, p. 86., *Klaeber's* Beowulf: And the Fight at Finnsburg, ed. by R. D. Fulk, Robert E Bjork and John D. Niles (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), p. 5., 'modig' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: noble spirit, high-spirited, noble-minded.
[75] Ibid., p. 86., 'mod-geþanc' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: mind, thoughts, thought.
[76] Highfield, p. 88.
[77] Ibid., p. 89.

to denote courage, and perseverance, and in this context I can understand Highfield's interpretation as a warrior's 'consciousness of himself as an authentic member of his class'.[78] These are sensations that can affect all *mod,* but the latter is simply more likely to affect a warrior than a monk or woman, which is why they occur most frequently with this connotation in heroic poetry. What is somewhat unsatisfactory about this article is Highfield's translation of *mod* as 'warrior-nature'; naturally, many words in a poem about warriors can be found to have a relation to warriors.[79] This type of translation practice attempts to include a certain dominant type of context in the definition of a word but excludes context that does not suit this objective and thereby risks failing to grasp its essence, namely its connection to mind.

Although these attempts to categorise the Old English vocabulary for mind and to find more specific definitions are worthwhile, together they especially attest how slippery the lexicon is. In 'Approaches to the Old English Vocabulary for Mind', Low frequently uses the word 'vagueness' as characteristic for terms relating to the mind.[80] I would query the appropriation of the word vagueness, because the broadness of the Old English lexicon also allows the early medieval mind to be a much broader concept than ours, and although this can make it difficult for us to define, awareness of semantic range is vital to our understanding. However, it is important to keep in mind that definitions will vary in different contexts. Low explains the polysemy of *mod* and its variants *modig* and *modigian,* the meaning of which can range from 'pride' and 'courage' to 'anger,' by studying their etymology: 'the word denoting a passion is extended to refer to the site of that passion, and thereby acquires a meaning different in kind from that whence it was derived'.[81] She warns us that 'various meanings of a word do not extrapolate to some larger picture of what the word 'really' means'.[82] Yet polysemy and ambiguity appear to lie at the heart of many early medieval texts, and the possibility of reading more than one meaning into vocabulary is crucial for many of the interpretations made, especially when it comes to concepts of mind. While it is impossible to know an author's exact intention, I will show in this thesis that ambiguity occasionally appears to be chosen precisely because it can open up an array of interpretations.

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[78] Ibid., p. 86.
[79] Ibid., p. 90.
[80] Low, 'Approaches to the Old English', p. 15.
[81] Soon-Ai Low, 'Pride, Courage, and Anger: The Polysemousness of Old English *Mod' Verbal Encounters: Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse Studies for Roberta Frank*, ed. by Antonina Harbus and Russell Poole (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), pp. 85-86.
[82] Low, 'Pride, Courage and Anger', p. 86.

Old English concepts of mind and their workings can become clearer by examining compound words, which consist of two elements. Old English contains an extensive range of compound nouns, many of which derive from the aforementioned *mod, hyge, sefa* and *ferð*. Examples are *modhord*[83], *modsefa*,[84] *hygebend*,[85] *ferðloca*,[86] *hordcofa*,[87] and *hreþerloca*.[88] Although there are many variants, most of these occur very infrequently, and some only once, across the Old English corpus. Don Chapman suggests that compounds were probably considered to be of a less permanent nature than simple terms, and that they were formed wherever considered necessary.[89] Soon-Ai Low explains that tautology and repetition in compounds such as *modsefa, breostgehygd*,[90] *ferhþgewit*[91], and also the numerousness with which they appear, were considered a regular feature in the vocabulary.[92] This shows a lot of lexical freedom; the compounds display creativity and the concept of mind proves itself flexible. Britt Mize maintains that 'the lack of explanatory tendency in passages using these poetic terms points to a firm basis for these compound words in traditional thought about the mind and in traditional patterns of language used to describe it'.[93] Mize responds to Rosemary Woolf's analysis of this type of compound in Cynewulf's *Juliana*, where she identifies words such as *breostcofa*[94] and *ferhþloca* to be left-headed endocentric compounds: compounds in which the first part, or morpheme, denotes semantically exactly the same as the whole word, and where the first morpheme is modified by the second.[95] The word's meaning is thus first confirmed within itself: *breost*[96] is said to mean exactly the same as *breostcofa,* and *ferhþ* as *ferhþloca.* Mize examines this, and argues that it would be highly

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[83] 'modhord' literally *mind-hoard. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the mind.
[84] 'modsefa' literally *mind-mind* or *mind-heart. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: The inner man, mind, spirit, soul, heart.
[85] 'hygebend' literally *mind-bond*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: A tie or bond which is furnished by the mind.
[86] 'ferðloca' literally *mind-locker*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: The soul's enclosure, bosom.
[87] 'hordcofa' literally *hoard-cove. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: A place for treasure, a retired chamber, closet, a place where the thoughts are stored, the breast, heart.
[88] 'hreþerloca' literally *breast-locker*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the breast.
[89] Don Chapman, 'Composing and Joining: How the Anglo-Saxons Talked about Compounding', *Verbal Encounters: Anglo-Saxon and Norse Studies for Roberta Frank*, ed. by Antonina Harbus and Russell Poole (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), pp. 77-88.
[90] 'breostgehygd' literally *breast-thought. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: The thought of the heart or mind, a thought.
[91] 'ferþgewit' literally *mind-wits*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: mental wit, understanding.
[92] Low, 'Approaches to the Old English', p. 19.
[93] Mize, 'The Representation', p. 60.
[94] 'breostcofa' literally *breast-cove*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the breast-chamber, breast, heart, mind.
[95] Mize, 'The Representation', p. 64., Rosemary Woolf, *Cynewulf's Juliana* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1977), p. 24.
[96] 'breost' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the breast as the seat of the vital powers, of the feelings, and of the affections. The heart, mind, thought; *pectus, cor, mens.*

exceptional for a compound to be left-headed; that is, for the first morpheme to principally affect meaning. He therefore argues that the second morpheme, instead, is the one which determines denotation. Mize concludes from this that the second element here 'denotes a container or store, and the determinant (mod-, breost-, etc.) specifies what kind of a container or store: namely, the kind *as which* the mind is figured by a metaphorical application of the second (head) elements'.[97] Whether this should indeed be considered a metaphorical usage is a question I will engage with later.

This interpretation of the first morpheme as the modifier indicates prominence of terms such as –cofa and –loca (other examples are *flǽsccofa,*[98] *banloca,*[99] and *hringloca*[100]), and secondary importance of the mind-terms in these compounds. The idea that terms for mind can be used as modifier is interesting, as it raises the question of what quality exactly they ascribe to words like *cofa* and *loca.* It also means that there is a significant difference between *breost* and *breostcofa,* the first being the content and the latter its container. As the *breost* is by Bosworth and Toller in itself already described as 'the seat of the vital powers', this conjures up images of a complex and layered system of mind and challenges notions of corporeality and containment. In contrast, there are far fewer compounds with a term for mind as the second element, examples are *meahtmod,*[101] *ofermod,*[102] *hathyge,*[103] *wissefa*.[104] These have a particular modifying quality in the first morpheme, affecting the second element that alters or influences the term for mind to such an extent that the whole compound noun signifies that particular quality of mind or emotion, rather than meaning *mind.* Whereas *loca* and *cofa* retain their full meaning of being a type of container when they are part of a compound, the terms for mind as the second element shift from meaning *mind* to meaning an aspect of the mind – an emotion or wisdom, for instance. This means that, whether the element for *mind* comes first or second, compound nouns never really define the mind; they either refer to its container or to an aspect of the mind. The exact meanings of the terms for mind do not become clearer from looking at the compounds, but when terms for mind are part of a compound, more specific characteristics of concepts of mind can become apparent.

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[97] Mize, 'The Representation', p. 66.
[98] 'flæsccofa' literally *flesh-cove*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: The flesh chamber, the body, flesh.
[99] 'banloca' literally *bone-locker*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: A bone enclosure, the skin, body.
[100] 'hringloca' literally *ring-locker*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: A coat of mail formed with rings.
[101] 'meahtmod' literally *power-mind*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Strong feeling, passion.
[102] 'ofermod' literally *over-mind*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Pride, arrogance, over-confidence.
[103] 'hathyge' literally *hot-mind. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Anger, fury, wrath.
[104] 'wissefa' literally *wise-mind*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: a wise-minded person.

The compounds discussed in this section have indicated particular physical spaces and materialities connected with the mind, as well as emotions and abilities of the mind and soul.

The examples I have given of Latin and Old English vocabulary for mind in this section of the chapter serve to give an impression of the variety and slipperiness of both languages. It is evident from translations and adaptations of texts such as *De consolatione philosophiae* and *Differentiae* that deliberate choices are made by early medieval English authors to change certain terms for mind that are used, but these changes do not lead to the interpretation or understanding of one uniform early medieval English concept of mind. Instead they call attention to different ideas on minds that do not necessarily agree with each other. The range of Old English vocabulary in texts such as *Maxims I* confirms that the lexicon is highly complex and it is difficult to define or translate words for mind into Modern English with vocabulary that scholars in this field all agree on. This complexity leads to certain scholarly choices in translation of the original languages, which I will discuss now.

1.3 Critical Aspects of Translation

The evidence of choices that authors of the early medieval sources made in selecting vocabulary for mind mean that we need to consider carefully the choices we make when translating Old English or Latin, so that early medieval concepts of minds are accurately reflected. I have shown the difficulty in creating a straightforward translation when a word such as *mod* offers many different potential meanings. Scholars in this field of research have therefore made different choices to capture the early medieval concept of mind in the right terms when translating a text. Judith Kaup decides for her article 'In the 'Mod' for Life', on *Maxims I*, not to translate *mod* into Modern English, in order to leave that concept unchanged. Kaup expands this practice, however, and uses *mod* where normally Modern English 'mind' would be used, and she even uses *mod* to discuss Old English *hyge* and *sefa*.[105] The latter form of usage means that Kaup leaves no distinction between *mod* and either of these terms, thereby limiting all mind-related vocabulary to an undefined *mod*. Antonina Harbus leaves the mind-related nouns in some of her translations untranslated, and in others she translates the full passage.[106] She chooses her method based on the type of interpretation and discussion she aims for, where some passages are subjected to detailed linguistic analysis, while others are part of a more comprehensive discussion that does not

[105] Judith Kaup, 'Maxims I: In the 'Mod' for Life', in *Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Language, Literature and Culture*, ed. by Alice Jorgensen, Frances McCormac and Jonathan Wilcox (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 193-210.
[106] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, pp. 33, 71.

rely on the specific interpretation of a selection of terms. Leslie Lockett, on the other hand, translates all Latin and Old English terms denoting the mind.[107] Her meticulous translations and analyses together provide clarity of what the early medieval concept of the mind entails. However, Lockett's translations do, inevitably, offer a certain interpretation of vocabulary in the primary source texts, which are then used as a basis that informs her paradigms of the early medieval mind. In the practice of translating words with a range of potential meanings, a scholar can thus already elect a certain direction of interpretation. This direction of interpretation is potentially, consciously or unconsciously, informed by the expectation of discovering certain patterns or paradigms, and there is thus a certain circular element to this approach. While doing so allows us to explore a particular avenue of research in depth, it also closes other potential routes. Choices in translation methods, then, can support the aims of the translator but limit the original source's conceivable meanings.

My own translation choices are guided by the examples I have given of other scholars' approaches, as well as the conviction that it is appropriate for this project to remain as faithful to the original language as possible, for fear of imposing modern conceptions of mind though translation or neglecting potential interpretations. There are various theories on translation that consider the effect of this on readership. We already touched upon the effect translation choices have by directing a reader to certain interpretations of source texts, and Lawrence Venuti argues that a certain amount of loss from the primary source's meaning, and thereby gain in connotations or interpretations by translation, cannot be avoided.[108] This gain is what he calls the 'domestic remainder', which is a surplus of meanings that is created when a translator attempts to reproduce textual information from the source, but which is only really meaningful in the context of the translating language.[109] Venuti describes how some translation techniques serve to domesticate a foreign text, while other approaches tend to foreignise the original, and thereby they can avoid some of the domestic remainder. Venuti states that,

> the only way that a translation can do right abroad, in relation to the source text and culture, is to do wrong at home, making an appreciable difference in relation to the cultural norms and institutions of the receiving situation,

[107] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies.*
[108] Lawrence Venuti, *Translation Changes Everything: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 246.
[109] Ibid., p. 14.

> contributing to a change, for instance, in how a foreign work or a foreign literature is perceived in translation.[110]

A translation that makes the original meaning less familiar to us than is technically necessary, is therefore less likely to contribute this surplus of meaning. Hugh Magennis discusses Venuti's theory on domestication versus foreignising and, after giving some alienating examples of how this technique has been applied to medieval texts, suggests that alternatives should be considered.[111] Magennis points out that a foreignising translation alters the original as well, and that any type of translation, or even editions of the original, distort it.[112] This leads us to conclude that any translation is potentially a misrepresentation, and a personal interpretation of the translator.

I am certain that I cannot avoid letting my own interpretations guide my translation choices. However, deciding not to translate certain words may in some contexts be an open-ended solution. Considering the complexity of the lexicon for *mind* in Old English and Latin, I intend not to translate words with a wide and complex semantic range. I have found in studying words for *mind*, such as *mod* and *hyge*, that there is often not one appropriate translation, but various options that influence the way the context is interpreted, as we have seen in translations of the poem *The Battle of Maldon*, for example. Such words denoting *mind* or an aspect of the mind, therefore, will be left unchanged. However, I will translate all words that are relatively unambiguous, or where ambiguities and complexities are not the subject of detailed study. This decision is made in order to counteract Venuti's described domestication; to make us strive to understand a concept because we recognise its alienness, rather than assuming familiarity. By leaving the original word relating to minds in place, I intend to maintain awareness that we are dealing with cultural concepts that are distant from our own, reminding us of the care we should take when converting those ideas into our own language and cultural context. I give dictionary definitions and translations, and occasional further information in the footnotes of this thesis. For compound nouns, I give a literal translation of both elements, as well as a dictionary translation of the whole word. The literal construction of the compounds may provide some extra insight in the consideration behind the concept, which is unavailable when I replace it with a Modern English word.

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[110] Ibid., p. 246.
[111] Hugh Magennis, *Translating Beowulf: Modern Versions in English Verse* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2011), pp. 9-12.
[112] Ibid., p. 12.

I will be speaking of the *mind*, *mental*, and occasionally *cognitive* in Modern English. Although I am aware of the limitations this poses with regards to representing medieval concepts, I see no better alternatives. The usage of the term *psychology* in reference to early medieval minds poses another complication. It is not used in translation because there would be no comparable concept in early medieval culture that would encompass the same notions as *psychology* entails, which in a modern dictionary definition includes:

> 1. The study or consideration of the soul or spirit. 2. The scientific study of the nature, functioning, and development of the human mind, including the faculties of reason, emotion, perception, communication, etc.; the branch of mind as an entity and in its relationship to the body and to the environmental or social context, based on observation of the behaviour of individuals or groups of individuals in particular (ordinary or experimentally controlled) circumstances.[113]

Although the first definition describes a notion that is very much applicable to my study of early medieval minds, the second describes the modern scientific application of psychology. The term *psychology* as defined in (1) is frequently used in the works of Lockett and Harbus to describe the functioning of the mind. It can be used to discuss the behaviour of minds, as I have in my comparison to modern medicine and knowledge of the mind, but I prefer to use terms such as mind and mental, in order to exclude the associations *psychology* has with modern science, health and illness. *Neuroscience* is a term that I do not consider suitable to apply to my research, for reasons addressed in section 1.1, and with a few exceptions, such as the work of Isidore of Seville, nerves are not discussed in relation to the mind, and the brain only infrequently. I will only discuss the term *brain* hereafter as the body-part described by early medieval English people, which occurs in a medical context and is only rarely described as locus for mental activity.

Conclusion

Even if terms and concepts of mind vary, modern Western society overall maintains a way of thinking about the mind in terms of categories, with clear systematic binaries, where ideas such as health are contrasted with illness and normality with abnormality. This approach is reflected in modern scholarship on early medieval minds, where some scholars focus on a

[113] 'psychology' *OED Online* <http://www.oed.com/> [Web. 27 March 2018].

perceived model of the standard or normal mind as influenced by, and which behaves according to philosophical traditions, as I will discuss in the next chapter. Similarly, there are studies centring only on what is explicitly described as the abnormal or unhealthy mind, utilising terminology associated with or derived from modern medicine.[114] Yet early medieval English literature, as even the brief consideration of the lexicon has indicated, contains a wide range of descriptions of minds that are not easily categorised in terms that are similar to our ideas today, and these are frequently neglected or only discussed within a certain area of study, such as disability studies. The primary literature depicts minds as diverse, changing and contingent on social status, physical and emotional state, stage in the life cycle, and so on.[115] As I will continue to demonstrate in Chapter 2, Latin, and especially Old English texts often adhere to more than one tradition of thinking about the mind, and many texts even show contradictions within their depictions of minds and mental faculties. This diversity is not only visible in textual descriptions, but it is intrinsic to the vocabulary that is used, as demonstrated by the Old English compound nouns, which contain elements with conflicting information about the state, location and even temperature of the mind.[116] Diverse descriptions of minds are found in all types of early medieval text, as we shall encounter in the other chapters of this thesis. I wish to avoid the limitations caused by language choices that dominate research on the early medieval mind, which only select one of the potential connotations of medieval vocabulary, or retrospectively diagnose early medieval people with modern illness. Instead I will look at the language describing minds and try to gain perspective on whether and how early medieval people would have perceived variety and normality, and whether the range of conceivable interpretations is there by design.

[114] See for example Turner, 'Medieval English Understanding of Mental Illness', pp. 97-120.
[115] Examples of this are discussed in chapters 1-3.
[116] Please see Chapter 2.2, 'The Mind as Incorporeal and Corporeal Entity', and 2.3, 'The Location of the Mind' for a discussion of this.

Chapter 2. Diverse Concepts of Mind in Early Medieval England

The selection of certain concepts of mind in early medieval England by present-day scholars, with the aim of developing a comprehensive model, frequently leads to the exclusion of concepts and features that do not conform to this model or which fall outside the scope of this model for other reasons. In this chapter, I will primarily focus on some philosophical traditions concerning dualism and corporeality that have been identified by scholars such as Malcolm Godden and Leslie Lockett, and which led them to create their particular present-day models of the early medieval mind and laid the foundation for this field of study.[1] I examine some of the key themes in their analyses and I trace these in the primary literature in order to gain understanding of the way minds in early medieval England have been researched. This will also illuminate exceptions to the patterns found by scholars in the primary texts that do not fit into scholarly models. This chapter falls into three main parts, all of which are led by insights gained from the maxims. I begin this chapter by tracing the classical or Latin, and the vernacular traditions that have led scholars to create present-day models of the early medieval mind. By comparing scholarly models and paradigms of the early medieval mind to my findings in the primary sources, I conclude that many of their categorisations are too narrow and do not leave room for diversity within early medieval concepts of minds. In the second part of this chapter, I look at descriptions of mind as a corporeal or incorporeal entity, one of the defining features that distinguishes the classical from the vernacular tradition. In some texts, the mind is described as part of the physical human body and sometimes as part of the soul; this is one of the major discriminating factors that leads to separate concepts of mind. Texts such as *Ælfric's Life of Saints*, the *Soul and Body* poems, and *Solomon and Saturn* provide much insight into this corporeality of minds. When some of the selected texts are compared to their source texts, it appears that an early medieval author has made specific adjustments enabling a description of mind to adhere to the customs of a certain tradition. Such sources indicate disagreement over the corporeal or incorporeal substance of mind and I explore this further in the third part of the chapter by considering descriptions in poetry and medical sources that place the mind in a certain part of the body. It is difficult to nominate a dominant locus for the mind: there have been various modern studies that emphatically locate early medieval minds in either the head *or* the chest,

[1] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind'., Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*.

and yet there are also several texts where the mind appears to be seated in both.[2] In this chapter, I do not aim to resolve any contradictions in descriptions or find a dominant philosophical tradition. By shedding light on the diversity of ideas about early medieval minds, it becomes evident that more than one concept or model of the mind was described and that several ideas and traditions co-existed at the same time and in the same culture. The creation of one model of the mind, which selects a harmonious and consistent message on the mind is likely to discount the conflicting and ambiguous information that is also present, and therefore impedes a more complete understanding of what early medieval minds were understood to be, and the diversity of concepts present in early medieval England.

2.1 Constructs of minds

> Dol biþ se þe his dryhten nat, to þæs oft cymeð deað unþinged
> Snotre men sawlum beorgað, healdað hyra soð mid ryhte.[3]
>
> Foolish is he who does not know his lord, death often comes uninvited to him.
> Wise men shelter their souls, hold their truth with righteousness.

This excerpt from the tenth-century Exeter Book maxims informs us of certain notions regarding wisdom and foolishness in relation to the soul.[4] Maxims are statements that are often considered to contain general 'folk-wisdom'.[5] It is therefore tempting to see them as commonly held beliefs by early medieval English people, but the Exeter Book maxims often seem to contradict themselves, thereby demonstrating that early medieval thought on the mind was not uniform, and that there was not necessarily one predominant way to consider the mind. While the opening fragment, which I discussed in Chapter 1, encourages the reader to open their minds and to share their knowledge, this is paradoxically followed by the assertion in this excerpt that wise men do not do this.[6] The statement 'to hold your truth' seems to imply that truth is something that needs to be carefully protected, just as the soul is. Because wisdom is presumably the opposite of foolishness, we would expect to see a similar

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[2] Mize, 'The Representation', pp. 57-90., Leslie Lockett, 'The Limited Role of the Brain in Mental and Emotional Activity According to Anglo-Saxon Medical Learning', in *Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Language, Literature and Culture*, ed. by Alice Jorgensen, Frances McCormac and Jonathan Wilcox (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 35-52., James T. McIlwain, 'Brain and Mind in Anglo-Saxon Medicine', *Viator*, 37 (2006), pp. 103-12.
[3] 'Maxims I', *The Exeter Book*, p. 157, ll. 35-36.
[4] Krapp and Dobbie, eds, *The Exeter Book*, p. xiv.
[5] Louis Jerome Rodrigues, *Anglo-Saxon Verse Charms, Maxims and Heroic Legends* (Pinner: Anglo-Saxon Books, 1993), p. 27.
[6] See pp. 29-30.

contrast between what the wise and the foolish *do*. However, sheltering your soul and holding your truth does not quite seem the reverse of not knowing your lord. This type of knowing does not necessarily appear related to knowledge or wisdom, but rather to acknowledgement of, or obedience to their lord, or to God. Two different statements are made here that do not really connect in a way that we would expect. Evidently, there is a connection for early medieval people between the life of the soul and the protection of truth. This suggests then, that the rational mind and the immortal soul are connected, or that they are possibly even one, according to the *Maxims I* poet.

The mind and soul are not always described as being connected in early medieval literature. My analysis of the Latin and Old English lexicon for *mind* in the previous chapter has raised the question of whether the mind and soul were considered to be distinct in early medieval culture. I concluded from Alcuin's *De ratione anima* that there is inconsistency within the application of the Latin terminology for the mind. Alcuin takes Isidore's influential system, where terms referring to the mental faculties are considered not as a separate entity but as the soul engaged in a particular activity, but, following Augustine, he acknowledges the mind and soul separately in this listing, albeit as part of the same entity. Scholars researching early medieval concepts of the mind have noticed distinctions between the classical and vernacular tradition, as well as distinctions in poetry and prose.[7] This leads them to create paradigms or models of what the early medieval mind was considered to be. I will consider and compare some archetypes described by present-day scholars in this part of the chapter.

Many modern models of the early medieval mind are based on a distinction in philosophical traditions of thinking about the mind and the soul, found in specific genres of text. Sten Ebbesen offers a definition of such traditions: '"Traditions" in philosophy are often […] thought of in terms of schools, the members of which share common tenets and attitudes thanks to intellectual descent from a common master. Often, members of a school of thought publicly declare their allegiance to the founder'.[8] Malcolm R. Godden was the first scholar to indicate a clear distinction in traditions of how the mind was perceived in early medieval England.[9] He argues that there are two prominent traditions of writing about the mind; one classical, Platonist-Christian tradition, and one vernacular. The classical philosophical

[7] Examples are Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, and Harbus' *The Life of the Mind.*
[8] Sten Ebbesen, 'The Traditions of Ancient Logic-cum-Grammar in the Middle Ages — What's the Problem?', *Vivarium*, 45 (2007), 136-52 (p. 137).
[9] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind'.

tradition, going back to Plato through Augustine and Boethius, is represented in the early medieval period by Alcuin of York, Alfred the Great and Ælfric of Eynsham. In this tradition, the mind is identified with the soul, whereas in the vernacular tradition, they are distinct entities.[10] Instead of studying traditions such as Godden proposes, Soon-Ai Low prefers to use a framework of 'common-sense psychology' and 'scientific psychology' to distinguish between two ways of discussing the mind. The first, common-sense psychology, is used to explain a personal internal view which is often 'embedded in narrative', whereas the latter is used for a more general perspective and is often 'embedded in discourse'.[11] The narrative will supposedly give more indication of what may have been common assumptions about the mind, expressed in lay terms, whereas discourse could give some more explicit insights into the technical language used to explain the functioning of the mind. Lockett recognises this distinction as well, but she describes narrative as a way of showing the mind of the individual, and discourse as texts with 'generalisations about the nature of human minds or souls'.[12] Instead of prescribing any set boundaries within this framework in order to categorise early medieval texts, Low uses this paradigm to find certain characteristics in the way early medieval people discussed the mind.

Contrastingly, Antonina Harbus groups Latin or classical and vernacular texts together based on dominance of patristic philosophies of mind. She also considers Old English prose to be part of an orthodox schema of the mind, but distinguishes Old English poetry as a separate tradition.[13] Harbus acknowledges that there would be regional variations and changes over time, and therefore restricts her study of what she identifies as the model of the mind to tenth- and eleventh-century Old English poetry.[14] In her broad study, Leslie Lockett retains the divide between vernacular and Latin traditions, although her inclusion of works on the mind in the Latin tradition is much more comprehensive than Godden's, and she recognises many divisions and variations within the traditions. Lockett discerns in her detailed study that the works of Alcuin, Alfred and Ælfric are not representative of the classical knowledge present in the early medieval period, but that they were exceptionally well-informed of certain traditions while others had access to fewer or different classical

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[10] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 271.
[11] Low, *The Anglo-Saxon Mind*, pp. 36-37.
Low uses the theory of 'Common-sense Psychology', or 'Folk Psychology' and 'Scientific Psychology' from Scott M. Christensen, and Dale R. Turner, eds., *Folk Psychology and the Philosophy of Mind* (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1993).
[12] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 19.
[13] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 2.
[14] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 9-10.

works.[15] She suggests that Godden's more simplistic division therefore places them in too prominent a position, while excluding other works that were influenced by, for example, Isidore of Seville and Gregory the Great, rather than Augustine. While the traditions are referred to as classical or Latin and the vernacular, it is important to note that the Latin tradition can be represented in a vernacular text and vice versa. The language of a certain text, while relevant, does not determine from what tradition an idea derives. This summary does by no means show the meticulous work these scholars have carried out in order to trace traditions and construct models. I have condensed their work here for the purpose of giving a clear impression of the types of idea and source that constitute the evidence for their present-day models of the early medieval mind, which have developed based on new findings and considerations of dominant voices in this period.

In order to understand what the classical tradition of the concept of the mind exactly entails, and therefore to determine which works were influenced by it, it is important to establish which texts were accessible to early medieval audiences. As discussed in the previous chapter, Alcuin's *De ratione animae* demonstrates that knowledge of Isidore of Seville's works was present in the early medieval period, but it is difficult to estimate to what extent individuals had access to pre-medieval materials. Michael Lapidge has compiled a comprehensive list of classical and patristic materials known to early medieval readers in England, which can be of great value in the pursuit to uncover traditions.[16] Leslie Lockett devotes a substantial part of *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies* to an investigation into the accessibility of classical works and their traces in early medieval writing on the mind. She indicates that it is a common misunderstanding amongst medievalists that early medieval psychological discourse was strongly influenced by Augustinian thinking, and explores in much detail various 'strains of thought within classical tradition'.[17] Among these she first lists Platonist-Christian psychology, in the tradition of Boethius and Augustine, secondly the Latin Fathers, influenced by Stoicism rather than Platonism and represented by John Cassian and Gennadius of Marseilles, and thirdly eclectic psychology, combining Platonist thought with non-systematic philosophy as in, for example Gregory the Great's *Dialogi*.[18] I will not examine these in detail in this thesis, but it is important to note that the classical tradition as described by Lockett contains various subdivisions.

[15] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 13.
[16] Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[17] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 179-81.
[18] Ibid., p. 181.

When descriptions of a vernacular tradition regarding the mind are compared to the classical or Latin, certain characteristics can be determined. In the vernacular tradition as described by Malcolm Godden, the mind is considered as an entity separate from the soul, while the mind is said to be part of the soul in the classical tradition. Godden also describes the vernacular mind as associated with passion just as much as intellect.[19] However, Godden acknowledges that features of the vernacular tradition are also present in the works of Alfred and Ælfric, who otherwise developed the Latin tradition.[20] Whereas the classical or Latin tradition contains many discussions about the mind and the soul, what they consist of, and how they function, the evidence of perceptions of the mind is less explicit in the vernacular. Antonina Harbus discerns that there are no statements on the mind in the extant corpus of Old English poetry, only references to it, which leaves us with much room for interpretation.[21] There is much more to be said on the presence and prominence of these traditions, and for a complete overview Lockett's *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies* is indispensable. For the present our focus will be on the some textual examples containing features of the classical and vernacular models of the mind.

The separation of traditions is problematic because there are texts that are clearly influenced by the classical tradition but are not part of it. How should we categorise, for example, texts that have been strongly influenced by classical philosophy, but that contain features that are part of another tradition, or contradictory information? Translations and alterations made by early medieval scholars to the original texts for their contemporary audience can be telling of how the various concepts of the mind and the soul have changed over time and how ideas can move from one school or tradition to another. This is an example from *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*:

> Hyre nama is anima þæt is sawul and seo nama gelympð to hire life. And spiritus gast belimpð to hire ymbwlatunge. Heo is sensus þæt is andgit oððe felnyss þonne heo gefret. Heo is animus þæt is mod þonne heo wat. Heo is mens þæt is mod þonne heo understent. Heo is memoria þæt is gemynd þonne heo gemanð. Heo is ratio þæt is gescead þonne heo toscæt. Heo is uoluntas

[19] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 271.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 10.

> þæt is wylla þonne heo hwæt wyle. Ac swa þeah ealla þas naman syndon sawul.[22]
>
> Her name is *anima* that is soul and the name refers to her life. And *spiritus,* ghost, belongs to her contemplation. She is *sensus,* that is intellect or feeling when she consumes. She is *animus,* that is *mod,* when she knows. She is *mens,* that is *mod,* when she understands. She is *memoria,* that is memory, when she remembers. She is *ratio,* that is reason, when she reasons. She is *uoluntas,* that is will, when she desires something. However, the name of all these is *sawul*.

This fragment resembles Isidore's *Differentiae* very closely and is likely to have been taken by Ælfric from Alcuin's *De ratione animae,* in which it is included. Ælfric substitutes *þonne* for *dum*, indicating a condition, and emphasises that *anima*, Old English *sawul*, is the main topic of discussion, and that all other names given to it refer to *anima* in a particular act. Alcuin does the same in his listing. By maintaining the mind as part of the soul, Ælfric adheres to the classical tradition. Surprisingly, given the extent and variety of the Old English lexicon for *mind*, both *animus* and *mens* are translated as *mod*. *Wat*, know, and *understent*, understand, are similar concepts, and Ælfric prioritises the importance of positioning them both in *mod* over any kind of aesthetic variation.

Godden and Lockett list Ælfric's work as part of the classical tradition, but as demonstrated, Ælfric made changes that diverge from the original. Similarly, '[the] substitution of mod 'mind' for Boethius, the first person speaker in [the] translation of the Consolation of Philosophy', formerly attributed to Alfred the Great, 'are striking in their deviation from their source texts'.[23] Many more examples can be given that demonstrate that the distinction between Latin and the vernacular, or scientific and common-sense psychology, does not work in such a simplified way, and that these traditions heavily influence each other. It is particularly difficult to categorise texts such as the *Old English Boethius*, but also *Soul and Body*, where the soul appears to have all faculties but blames the body for its decisions, or *Maxims I*, offering confusing information about the relationship between mind and soul, according to the systems provided by other scholars, as all of these texts seem to contain characteristics of both.

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[22] Ælfric of Eynsham, 'Christmas' *Ælfric's Lives of Saints: Being a Set of Sermons on Saints' Days formerly observed by the English Church,* ed. by Walter W. Skeat, Vol. I, EETS O.S. 76 and 82 (London: Trübner, 1881-1900), pp. 20-22, ll. 180-88.
[23] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind,* p. 10.

Although the primary distinctive feature of the vernacular tradition is that the mind, which contains thoughts and emotions, is seen as separate from the soul, an important second distinction in tradition lies in corporeality versus incorporeality. Godden also indicates that aside from the soul and the mind, a conscious 'self' can be identified in many vernacular texts, among which *Maxims I, Beowulf* and the *Wanderer* are mentioned, complicating matters even further.[24] Harbus develops this idea to create a 'model of the mind in poetic expression [and to study] how it interacts with the self as a catalyst in personal development'.[25] Potential fragmentation of the mind will be further reflected on in Chapter 4, but for now I will return to a distinctive feature that is said to separate vernacular from classical tradition, namely the mind as considered to be an incorporeal or corporeal entity.[26] Furthermore, in case of the latter, I will pay attention for the locus of the mind in the body. Studying these features will aid us in learning if they can make the traditions somewhat more distinct, and whether concepts of minds in early medieval England can truly be divided into a classical and a vernacular tradition.

2.2. The Mind as Incorporeal and Corporeal Entity

> Hyge sceal gehealden, hond gewealden,
> seo sceal in eagan, snyttro in breostum,
> þær bið þæs monnes modgeþoncas.[27]
>
> The *hyge* must be restrained, the hand controlled,
> sight must be in eyes, wisdom in the breast,
> there are a man's mind-thoughts.

This fragment from *Maxims I* gives a very physical description of the location of wisdom and thought, which appears to be the mind or location of the mind. What is slightly odd about this excerpt is the lack of verbs in the second clause of lines 121-22. It is unclear which modal or auxiliary verb the poet implied to be used for *hond gewealden* and *snyttro in breostum.* As *sceal* and *bið* are frequently used throughout the poem and precede these clauses, either of these may have been intended. The intended verbs could have been implicit for an early medieval reader, as is evident from the frequent absence of verbs in the maxims. The demand for disclosure of knowledge and expression of thought with which the poem opens is replaced

[24] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', pp. 288-89.
[25] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind,* p. 12.
[26] See Chapter 4.2 'The Travelling Mind'.
[27] 'Maxims I', *The Exeter Book,* p. 161, ll. 121-23.

with encouragement to control the *hyge* and, again, to conceal thoughts and wisdom inside the breast. Whereas *Maxims I* previously suggested that the rational mind and the soul are strongly connected, it now implies that both wisdom and 'mind-thoughts' are situated in the breast. This raises some questions: does this mean that a soul can be part of the body, or is the mind here a separate physical entity which stands in communication with an incorporeal soul? Can there be both a corporeal *and* an incorporeal part of the mind? Or is the breast in the maxims only a metaphor?

I have demonstrated that the lexicon of Old English contains terms with connotations that include both the mind and its properties, such as *mod*, which can mean both 'mind' and 'courage'.[28] Similarly, Latin contains terms that stand for the soul, as well as for the soul in a particular act, such as *memoria*; meaning soul in the state of remembering. Hereby, the properties of the mind, such as memory, are intrinsically connected with the mind or the soul. The various traditions and models identified by scholars distinguish between where properties belong: to the mind, soul, or body. The term 'dualism' is often used in a basic anthropological sense as described by John Cooper; where there is the body as well as a part of the individual's existence that survives the death of the body, which was for example adopted by Jacob Riyeff in his discussion of the Old English *Soul and Body* tradition.[29] This implies that in addition to the body, something incorporeal exists that survives death, and this could be the soul or the mind. Lockett studies many early medieval divisions of body, soul, and mind, and argues that our own dualist prejudices should be set aside when studying early medieval psychology. Riyeff responds to this by claiming that 'anthropological dualism, which separates soul or mind from the body, does not necessarily disappear if we set aside the unitary soul of the Platonic Christian tradition and/or Cartesian mind/body dualism'.[30] Indeed, dualism is present in a variety of ways in early medieval literature, and while it may be important to be aware of our own dualist presumptions, whether based on religion, Cartesian philosophy or otherwise, a comparison between mind-body dualism and distinctions in early medieval culture may be beneficial. In order to gain a better understanding of the body-soul and soul-mind dualism in early medieval culture, I will now move on to discuss corporeality and incorporeality of the soul and mind.

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[28] See Chapter 1.2 'Latin and Old English Vocabulary for Mind'.

[29] John W. Cooper, *Body, Soul and Life Everlasting: Biblical Anthropology and the Monism-Dualism Debate* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 50, 179., Jacob Riyeff, 'Dualism in Old English Literature: The Body-and-Soul Theme and Vercelli Homily IV', *Studies in Philology*, 112.3 (2015), 453-68 (p. 457)., See also 'Soul and Body I' *The Vercelli Book*, ed. by George Philip Krapp (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1932), pp. 54-59., 'Soul and Body II' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 174-77.

[30] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 177., Riyeff, 'Dualism in Old English Literature', p. 461.

The substances of which a person is comprised were subject to much discussion in the early medieval period.[31] Lockett summarises the most prominent ideas as either 'a tripartite anthropology that attributed to human nature a fleshly body, an animated soul […], and an intellectual spirit' versus the idea that the spirit was 'part of the soul, and consequently human nature comprised only two substances, flesh and a 'unitary' soul, so called because it united in a single entity the powers to animate and govern the body, all mental activity, and the capacity to survive the death of the body and live on in the afterworld'.[32] A small group also considered a bipartite concept including a unitary soul, but Lockett contends that in much Old English literature the soul exclusively plays a role after death, while the body, mind and life-force, *feorh*, participate during life.[33] The *feorh* is described by Lockett as 'a component of the living human being that vivifies the body and dissipates upon departing from the body at death'.[34] Although mentioned occasionally, the *feorh* does not play a very active role in early medieval literature. The Platonic-Christian tradition as described by Godden contains a further division which maintains Plato's ideas on the three-part soul; the rational, irascible, concupiscent. Boethius maintains the three-part soul in the highly influential sixth-century *De consolatione philosophiae* and identifies four levels of understanding: *sensus* in lower animals, *imaginatio*, which is the 'ability to recognise and understand shapes and identities', reason, which is only present in humans, and '*intelligentia*; a direct perception of ultimate truth and forms, which is the divine understanding'.[35] The unitary soul, then, can have an internal division.

Because the soul is incorporeal after death, it is reasonable to assume that it is also incorporeal during life. Nonetheless, there are various perspectives on this. Alcuin of York describes a body and an incorporeal soul, of which the highest part, *mens,* is divided into understanding, will and memory.[36] The soul rules the body with desire, reason and anger, of which reason is the most important.[37] Lockett summarises the nuances in the classical ways of thinking, following Neoplatonist and Stoicising Christian thought, which was influential in the early medieval period. An example is Claudianus Mamertus, who wrote *De statu animae*

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[31] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies,* p. 17.
[32] Ibid., p. 17.
[33] Ibid., pp. 17-18.
[34] Ibid., p. 43.
[35] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', pp. 276, 290., Boethius, *Philosophiae consolatio,* ed. by Ludovicus Bieler. CCSL XCIV (Turnhout: Brepols, 1957), p. 98.
[36] 'Alcuin*, De ratione animae'*, p. 78.
[37] Peter Clemoes, 'Mens Absentia Cogitans in *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer'*, *Medieval Literature and Civilisation: Studies in Memory of G. M. Garmonsway*, ed. by D. A. Pearsall and R. A. Waldron (London: Athlone Press, 1969), pp. 62-77 (pp. 71-72).

in the fifth century, arguing that the intellect must be incorporeal because the intellect can comprehend ideas and entities that are not spatial, such as God. In his logic, if the intellect were to be spatial, God would have to be spatial as well.[38] Contrastingly, John Cassian, adhering to the Stoic tradition, reasoned in the fourth and early fifth century in favour of corporeality, even 'if only very thinly', because only God is incorporeal.[39] Furthermore, the soul is frequently given a specific location in the body. Plato separated the soul into three parts, and located them in the head, chest and abdomen, while Cassiodorus, in *De Anima*, located the whole soul in the head.[40] Some of these ideas regarding a physical location for the soul resonate in early medieval literature from England. In the Old English dialogues, the prose *Solomon and Saturn*, the soul rests in three places, making it potentially corporeal, but difficult to place in any of the traditions I just discussed:

> Saga me hwar resteð þas mannes sawul þone se lychaman slepð
> Ic þe secge, on þrim stowum heo byð; on þam bragene, oððe on þere heortan,
> oððe on þam blode.[41]

Cross and Hill give the Latin source-text in their commentary, which is identical in message to the Old English:

> Dic mihi ubi sit anima hominis, quando dormiunt homines? In tribus locis: aut
> in corde, aut in sanguine, aut in cerebro.[42]

> Tell me where does a man's soul rest when his body sleeps?
> I tell you, it is in three places; in the brain, or in the heart, or in the blood.

Old English *oððe* and Latin *aut* suggest that the soul is not in three places at once, but that we either do not know where it is, or that the soul might travel through the body when the body is asleep. This also raises the question of where the soul is when the body is awake. Ultimately, the soul does not appear to be fixed in a certain place. The identification between the soul and blood has been studied by Robinson, but was disputed by Lockett, who instead

[38] Harbus, *Life of the Mind*, p. 18., Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies,* p. 191.
[39] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies,* pp. 181, 196.
[40] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 290.
[41] 'Solomon and Saturn 41', *The Prose* Solomon and Saturn *and* Adrian and Ritheus, ed. by James E. Cross and Thomas D. Hill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), p. 31.
[42] 'Collectanea Bedae' *The Prose* Solomon, p. 105.

pays attention to the *feorh*, or life-force, although that too has long been associated with blood.[43]

In the vernacular tradition, the soul is often described as a separate entity from the mind. Where the Latin *animus* and *mens* have influence during life, survive death and participate in the afterlife, the *mod* in Old English is very different and appears to have a dominant role during life. The *sawol*, soul, however, has very little or no control over what the body does, but it does survive death.[44] There are many examples that provide some information about what the soul or mind contains, but some of them give conflicting information. Yet, there are also some clear listings of properties that reveal what the soul is; in *Vercelli Homily IV* the soul gives a long speech to the body, in which it blames the body for its choices during life and its eternal damnation:

> Ic wæs þin eacnung y þin cenning, y þa ic wæs gast fram Gode to þe cumen. Ic wæs þin wlite y þin wunsumnes; ic wæs þin spræc y þin swæcc y þin fnæst y þin hawung y þin gehyrnes y þin glædnes y þin onmedla, ic wæs þin geðanc y þin fægernesse y þin lufu y þin gestæðþignes y þin getreownesse, gif þu ænige treowa hæfdest; y ic wæs þin feðe y þin gang y þin staðol y þin gemynd; y ic wæs þin gamen y þin gladung y þin hleahtor y þin myrhð. [45]
>
> I was your conception and your birth, and I was a spirit that came from God to you. I was your appearance and your pleasantry; I was your speech and your smell and your breath and your sight and your hearing and your joy and your glory, I was your thought your beauty and your love and your steadiness and your truthfulness, if you had any truth; and I was your movement and your journey and your foundation and your *gemynd*; and I was your amusement and your gladness and your laughter and your pleasure.

Here, twenty-five attributes are listed that the soul brought to the body. The soul describes itself in terms of physical features, such as the senses. The arrival of the soul in the body is also described, thought and emotions are listed, and the mind, *gemynd*, is expressly mentioned. All of these are part of the soul, rendering the body a characterless empty shell, and yet all the blame for the decisions made during life is placed on the body. This fragment

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[43] Fred C. Robinson, 'The Devil's Account of the Next World: An Anecdote from Old English Homiletic Literature.' *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 73 (1872), 362-71., Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 50.
[44] Lockett, 'The Limited Role of the Brain', p. 37.
[45] 'Vercelli Homily IV', *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, ed. by D. G. Scragg, EETS O.S. 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 90-105, l. 274.

therefore adheres to neither the classical description of the soul, even though it seems to encompass the mind, nor to the vernacular tradition which elects the mind as the seat of consciousness and mental faculties. As Lockett describes, the soul, or *sawol*, usually 'enters the body at animation, departs at death, and does very little in between; its primary purpose is to represent the individual in the afterworld'.[46] This fragment contains features from a tradition of 'Soul and Body' poems, which also depict a soul addressing a deceased body.[47] Godden describes the soul in this type of poem as the beneficiary or victim 'of a separate mental faculty which is associated with the body'.[48] It is clear that the soul is accusing the body of bad behaviour, but by acclaiming that all the features mentioned in *Vercelli Homily IV* are part of the soul, the soul is practically accusing itself. I will return to the question of whether the mind or part of the mind was considered to survive in early medieval England, in Chapter 5 of this thesis. For now, I will conclude that, irrespective of apparent dualism, there seems to be a close link between soul, mind and body.

In the vernacular tradition, the mind is often described as a corporeal entity. The mind is not considered to be part of the soul, and is frequently literally located in the body instead.[49] As *Maxims I* demonstrates by locating both wisdom and 'mind-thoughts' in the breast, many Old English poems give the mind a physical position in the body. The description of the creation of Adam in the prose *Solomon and Saturn*, in which many questions relating to the Old Testament are asked and answered, gives some insight into the physical substances man is made of:

> Saga me þæt andworc þe adam wæs of geworht, se ærustan man.
> Ic ðe secge, of viii punda gewihte.
>
> Saga me hwæt hatton þage
> Ic ðe secge, þæt æroste wæs foldan pund of ðan him wæs flesc geworht. Oðer wæs fyres pund; þanon hym wæs þæt blod read and hat. Þridde wæs windes pund; þanon hym wæs seo æðung geseald; feorðe wæs wolcnes pund; þanon hym wæs his modes unstaðelfæstnes geseald. Fifte wæs gyfe pund; þanon hym wæs geseald sefa and geðang. Syxste was blosmena pund; þanon hym

[46] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 35.
[47] 'Soul and Body II' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 174-78.
[48] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 289.
[49] Low, 'The Anglo-Saxon Mind', p. 79., Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 7-8.

> wæs eagena myssenlicnys geseald. Seofoðo wæs deawes pund; ðanon him becom swat. Eahtoðe wæs sealtes pund; þanon him wæron þa tearas sealte.[50]
>
> Tell me the material from which Adam, the first man, was made.
> I tell you, from eight pounds' weight.
>
> Tell me what they are called.
> I tell you, the first was a pound of earth from which his flesh was made. The second was a pound of fire; from which his blood was red and hot. The third was a pound of wind; from which his breath was given; the fourth was a pound of cloud; from this his instability of *mod* was given. The fifth was a pound of forgiveness; from this was given his *sefa* and thought. The sixth was a pound of blossoms; from this he was given the variety of his eyes. The seventh was a pound of dew; from this he received sweat. The eighth was a pound of salt; from this his tears were salt.

This description has not previously been considered by scholarship on early medieval minds, but *mod* and *sefa* are both mentioned, created from two different substances. Only *mod* and eyes are given an adjective, instability and variety, both referring to change and diversity. The soul is not referred to at all, which might indicate that it is not considered to be material in this text. This fragment mentions the classical elements earth, fire, and wind explicitly, and water appears in the form of cloud and dew. Clouds in early medieval texts may not only have been associated with water, but also with the sky or heaven. In several illuminations clouds function to reveal the hand of God or to allow the ascension to heaven, thereby ascribing to the clouds a sense of holy passage, or at least obscuring a liminal space between heaven and earth.[51] Adam is thus created from materials that already existed, but many of them are transient and changeable; fire, wind, cloud, blossoms and dew only appear under certain conditions, and disappear easily. Yet they are the substances that are consolidated in man. Only one immaterial substance can be said to derive directly from God, and that is forgiveness. This is an interesting addition, because even though Adam's *sefa* and thought intrinsically consisted of God's forgiveness, the result of his decisions, made by that very element, were not forgiven by God and he was cast out of paradise. The changeability of the

[50] 'Solomon and Saturn 8-9', *The Prose* Solomon and Saturn, p. 26.
[51] Joanna Kramer, *Between Earth and Heaven: Liminality and the Ascension of Christ in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), pp. 201, 207.

materials that man was made of therefore cumulate in a risky combination, and we can conclude that the *mod* and *sefa* are inherently unstable.

The view that the mind is part of the soul would enable the possibility that the mind could survive death. The soul is seen as immortal, and presumably every part of it would survive. This is evident in Augustine's *Soliloquia*, written in the fourth century, and surviving in various manuscripts from early medieval England.[52] He argues specifically for the endurance of the part called *animus*, the mind:

> Omne, quod in subiecto est, si semper manet, ipsum etiam subiectum maneat semper necesse est. Et omnis in subiecto est animo disciplina. Necesse est igitur semper animus maneat, si semper manet disciplina. Est autem disciplina veritas et semper, ut in initio libri huius ratio persuasit, veritas manet. Semper igitur animus manet nec umquam animus mortuus dicitur.[53]
>
> If everything which is in a subject endures forever, it must be that the subject itself also endures forever. And every teaching is in a subject, namely the mind. So it must be that the mind endures forever, if the teaching remains forever. Now, a teaching is truth, and truth endures forever, as reason demonstrated at the beginning of this book. Therefore the mind endures forever, and the mind is never called dead.

In this discussion, it is surmised that a teaching can only live in a mind, and because certain teachings, such as truth, endure forever, we know that the mind lasts forever. However, when the mind is not considered to be part of the soul, but a physical entity, its survival afterwards may seem much less likely because the body does die. Yet, there are several early medieval texts that support the notion of an immortal mind. The second *Lorsch Riddle* has a solution which is generally agreed upon to be *cor*.[54] Lockett describes this as the mind as located in the heart, and the 'bodily organ responsible for mental activity'.[55] This riddle gives some insight in the mind as physical entity:

> Haec modico peragro speleo, si claudar in aruis,
> Mortifero concussa ruant ni ergastula casu.

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[52] Augustine, 'Soliloquia', *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera* I. IV, ed. by Wolfgang Hörmann, CSEL 89 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1986), p. xii.
[53] Augustine, 'Soliloquia' 2.13.24, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera,* p. 79, ll. 1-7.
[54] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 275.
[55] Ibid.

Sin uero propria dire de sede repellor,
Mortis in occasu extimplo fio pulpa putrescens
Sic sunt fata mea diuersa a patre creata.[56]

If I am enclosed in my tiny cave during this earthly life,
I pass through these places, unless my prison-house should collapse, struck by the occasion of death.
But if I am fearfully propelled from my proper seat,
on the occasion of my death I promptly become rotting flesh:
thus are my different fates ordained by the Father.[57]

This riddle shows a type of dualist separation of the speaker. The speaker describes himself both as being enclosed in a cave or prison, and simultaneously as being that same prison which becomes rotting flesh. While being a physical part of the body, the speaker seems to suggest that at least part of himself survives death, and part of him decays. An interesting comparison can be made to a description of the death of the body, considered by Victoria Thompson in the homily *Vercelli IX*; a text containing a variety of depictions of death, which survives in the Vercelli Codex.[58] One section of the homily describes how the figure of death disables a person's senses one by one.[59] Thompson argues that in doing so, 'death is imprisoning some kind of awareness inside it: the body is sealed by death just as the damned souls are trapped in hell'.[60] Is this awareness then comparable to that which survives in the *Lorsch Riddle*? The relationship between bodily decay and survival of (part of) the mind will be further discussed in Chapter 5, where I consider descriptions of cognitive activity in relics.

Even though the mind can apparently have a strong attachment to the body in descriptions from early medieval England, there are also texts that depict a mind that is capable of leaving the body. The source text of poems such as *The Seafarer* can be crucial in determining whether such descriptions were intended to be read as literal or metaphorical. Lockett draws a parallel between a passage in the *Lorsch Riddles* and a passage in *The Seafarer*, an Old English poem that survives in the Exeter Book, in which the mind leaves the body to travel land and sea. This latter passage has previously been compared to Alcuin's *De*

[56] 'Aenigmata Anglica 2 [Lorsch Riddles]', ed. by Ernst Dümmler, MGH Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini, 1.20-3 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), p. 21.
[57] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 278.
[58] Victoria Thompson, *Dying and Death in Later Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002), pp. 46-47.
[59] 'Vercelli IX', *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, p. 170, ll. 79-82.
[60] Thompson, pp. 49-50.

ratione animae by Peter Clemoes, but Lockett argues that *The Seafarer* and the *Lorsch Riddles* probably both have the *De opificio Dei* by Lactantius, connected to the Stoic tradition, as source text.[61] She argues that these texts display features of the tradition of vernacular psychology, whereas *De ratione animae* belongs more convincingly to the Platonizing Christian tradition. The Stoic and Platonizing tradition are distinct schools of thought within the classical tradition as set out by Lockett, and they influence readings literal and metaphorical readings of the texts that display features of those traditions. That is what is most important for our understanding of these texts: this comparison can tell us about perceptions of the mind. These texts, which consider the mind to be a physical part of the body, describe the mind as travelling outside of the body during life. This is an excerpt from *The Seafarer*, contained in the Exeter Book:

> Forþon nu min hyge hweorfeð ofer hreþerlocan,
> Min modsefa mid mereflode
> Ofer hwæles eþel hweorfeð wide,
> Eorþan sceatas, cymeð eft to me
> Gifre ond grædig, gielleð anfloga
> Hweteð on hwælweg hreþer unwearnum
> Ofer holma gelagu.[62]
>
> Therefore my *hyge* now departs out of its *hreþerlocan*,
> my *modsefa*, with the sea's tide,
> Over the whale's realm, roaming broadly,
> the corners of the earth, it comes again to me
> desirous and greedy— flying solitary and yelling,
> exciting the *hreþer* without hindrance on the whale road,
> across the stretch of water.

It has been suggested that the travels described in this poem refer to dreams, hallucinations or even that they are an allegory for death.[63] Allen J. Frantzen concludes that because *The Seafarer* does not mention sleep, this must describe the mind's flight through memory.[64] However, the physicality of these descriptions is striking. The *hyge* escapes from its bodily

[61] Clemoes, p. 65., and Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 223-24.
[62] 'The Seafarer' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 143-47 (p.145), ll. 58-64.
[63] Clemoes, p. 73.
[64] Allen J. Frantzen, *Anglo-Saxon Keywords* (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2012), p. 78.

container, and flies over land and sea. It is emotional, greedy and it yells, and does not seem to need the body for any of this. Whether this description of the mind leaving the body was intended to be literal or metaphorical is debatable, and depends on whether the mind was considered as separable from the body. Lockett suggests that the answer may lie in the identification of a source text for the poem. If the source came from a Platonist-Christian tradition, it is likely that the mind would have been identified with the soul, and its descriptions in *The Seafarer* seen as a conceptual metaphor. However, if the source text is instead determined to be *De opificio Dei* by Lactantius, as Lockett suggests, which cardio-centralises the mind and even corporalises the soul, this depiction of the mind can be interpreted as appearing literally in the chest.[65] Although several words refer to the mind, and the mind's container, there are no references to any body-part that a modern reader would recognise, such as the heart, the breast or the head. Interestingly, the agency of the mind shifts in this passage; the *hyge* is the agent in departing from the body, but is then described as coming to 'me', and ends with the *hreþer* being excited by something, possibly by the *hyge* or 'me'. Godden discerns 'two centres of consciousness' here: an inner personality, and a 'self', which can control action.[66] I will return to this separation, and consider the travelling mind described in *The Seafarer* in more detail in Chapter 4, but first I will discuss its implications for our understanding the physicality of the mind.[67]

Because of the physical description of the *hyge* escaping the *hreþerlocan* — the mind vacating its enclosure — I will for a moment assume that the poem depicts the flight of the mind as literal. My assumption here is that if this description was meant as a metaphor, the departure from its seat would not need to be explicitly mentioned. However, despite the *hyge*'s ability to travel outside the body in *The Seafarer*, the mind dies with the body in the same poem:

> Ne mæg him þonne se flæschoma, þonne him þæt feorg losað,
> ne swete forswelgan ne sar gefelan,
> ne hond onhreran ne mid hyge þencan.[68]
>
> Nor will the body be able then, when he loses his life,
> To taste sweetness, nor feel pain,
> Nor stir the hand, nor think with the *hyge*.

[65] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 424-25.
[66] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 294.
[67] See Chapter 4.2 'The Travelling Mind'.
[68] 'The Seafarer' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 143-47. ll. 94-96.

When the mind is dead it cannot think anymore and all that survives is the soul. In this description, the mind is listed together with the senses and the ability to move the hand. This therefore suggests that it was very much considered to be part of, or to *be* a physical organ. This brings us back to the theme in the Soul and Body poems, in which the soul addresses the decaying body, blaming it for its damnation, and thereby admitting the body's dominance during life. *Vercelli Homily IV* described how the soul gave the body twenty-five attributes, and yet it was the body that made damning decisions during life. Furthermore, in *Soul and Body II,* the soul describes itself as having been locked inside the body, but there being very little interaction between them. This poem states that after their death, once every seven days, the soul visits the body and addresses it:

> Þær þu þonne hogode her on life,
> þenden ic þe in worulde wunian sceolde,
> þæt ðu wære þurh flæsc ond þurh firenlustas
> stronge gestyred ond gestaþelad þurh mec,
> ond ic wæs gast on þe from gode sended,
> næfre þu me swa heardra helle wita
> ned gearwode þurh þinra neoda lust.[69]
>
> If you had been mindful here during life,
> when I had to live in you on this earth,
> that you were strongly stirred by the flesh
> and sinful desires, and you were stabilised by me
> and I was a spirit in you, sent by God,
> you would have never prepared me for the hard pain of hell
> Through the lust of your desire.

This reproach ends with the soul claiming that the body would have made very different choices during life if it had been mindful of the consequences for the soul. In this fragment from *Soul and Body II,* the soul is speaking, but what part of the body it addresses is not clear. Whichever is addressed must have had the power to make decisions during life, because the soul attributes agency to it. The only feature it contributed to the body was its stabilisation, reminding of the *modes unstaðelfæstnes* in *Solomon and Saturn* and the description in *The Seafarer* where the *hyge* is influenced by something else. Rather than the

[69] 'Soul and Body II', *The Exeter Book,* pp. 175-76, ll. 39-45.

self, it is the soul that affects the body or mind in some way in *Soul and Body II*. The soul is addressing something that is in a late stage of decay here, because the body is vividly described as having fallen apart through the effort of worms. Although it seems that the body has to listen to the soul's tormenting accusations and suffer from it, the body has previously been described as dumb and deaf. It cannot hear the soul and it cannot respond; yet the soul still finds reason and means to address it. The final lines of the poem also explain that the body's state is a warning: 'þæt mæg æghwylcum men to gemyndum modsnotterra'; that to all of wise men can be a reminder, suggesting the potential of experiencing an alternative fate after death.[70] Although this is not explicitly stated, it seems that when the mind is considered to be part of the body, and blamed for decisions during life, it is supposed to decay with the body. Yet that is not what is suggested to happen to the mind in this poem, which, despite its physical circumstances, is present and it is identified and tortured by the soul.

To summarise and simplify the complex discussion in this section of the chapter, in the Latin or classical tradition the mind is said to be part of the soul, and in the vernacular tradition to be separate from the soul. To determine whether the mind was considered part of the soul, I have considered whether it was described as a corporeal or incorporeal entity. Distinct ideas appeared to have been present regarding this in early medieval England, and descriptions ranging from the unitary soul to the soul resting in the body, in *Solomon and Saturn*, and the substances that the first man was made of, all offer different possibilities for interpretation. When the soul is clearly considered distinct from the body, and from the mind, it is still not possible to conclude that the mind is definitely corporeal. Even after death, the soul argues with the body in *Soul and Body II*, and it is unclear whether the mind has decayed or if it is functional. Furthermore, in texts such as *The Seafarer*, a very physical description of the locus of the mind is given, yet the mind is capable of escaping the body and travelling. Occasionally, in texts such as these, both the possibility for a literal, and for a metaphorical reading can be present in one text, and, as we have seen, scholarship sometimes determines which to choose by considering the source text. Is this how these texts would have been understood in early medieval England? Would an audience have been aware of the tradition a poem derives from, or is the ambiguity within texts there on purpose? What has become clear is that a number of concepts of corporeal and incorporeal minds and souls were present in the early medieval period, and that it is not always evident which interpretation was intended.

[70] 'Soul and Body II', *The Exeter Book*, p. 178, ll. 120-21.

The incorporation of corporeality as a factor that determines what tradition a text adheres to a model of the early medieval mind is therefore problematic.

2.3 The Location of the Mind

> Hond sceal heofod inwyrcan, hord in streonum bidan,
> gifstol gegierwed stondan, hwonne hine guman gedælen.[71]
>
> The head must influence the hand, treasure remain in its hoards,
> the gift-throne stand prepared, for when men receive gifts from him.

The location of the mind in *Maxims I*, as in many other early medieval texts, is unclear. In this passage, the head is mentioned, and can be taken as a potential locus, but its function is rather ambiguous. The action of the head influencing the hand is followed by the inaction of keeping treasure locked in the hoard. The recommendation of having the treasure remain in its hoard is opposed by the idea of the gift-throne and the sharing of gifts, reminding of other passages in the maxims where knowledge must be locked away but also be shared.[72] The only connection between these instructions is the sense of expectation; perhaps the treasure remains in its hoard until the gift-throne is occupied and the gift-exchange can begin. In this interpretation, a sense of alertness and readiness is present in the description of the head. Problematically, however, '[h]ond sceal heofod inwyrcan', can be translated as either 'the head must influence the hand', or 'the hand must influence the head', as the grammatical form of both *hond* and *heofod* can be read as nominatives.[73] We cannot conclude with certainty therefore, whether the head could be seen as the seat of thought or provoker of action in this specific passage, or alternatively, as a reactive entity, driven by sensory input. Lockett maintains that the head is only mentioned here because it 'can see, not because it can engage in deliberative thought'.[74] She refers to the passage in *Maxims I* where the mind was located in the chest; 'snyttro in breostum, þær bið þæs monnes modgeþoncas'; 'wisdom in the breast, there are a man's mind-thoughts'.[75] However, the hand has also been mentioned before in the maxims: 'the *hyge* must be restrained, the hand controlled'.[76] The similarity between those passages concerning control over the hand by a mind or head raises the possibility of locating the mind in the head. But how representative are these ideas from the

[71] 'Maxims I' *The Exeter Book,* pp. 156-63, ll. 67-68.
[72] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, pp. 79-80.
[73] 'Maxims I' *The Exeter Book,* pp. 156-63.
[74] Lockett, 'The Limited Role of the Brain', p. 38.
[75] 'Maxims I', *The Exeter Book,* p. 161, ll. 122-23.
[76] Ibid., l. 121.

maxims of thought on the locus of the mind in early medieval England? Modern scholarship on the early medieval mind often favors one dominant location for the mind. Lockett has argued that the mind in vernacular poetry is situated in the chest, while James T. McIlwain contends that the brain was frequently considered as locus for the mind.[77] It is not uncommon for Old English poetry to suggest more than one physical position for the mind. As expressed in the maxims, this can sometimes even occur in the same text. I will consider various notions of locations of the mind in this section of the chapter, which leads to a better understanding of what can potentially influence the mind.

While the head might seem the most obvious place for the mind to a modern audience, the chest is the preferred location in scholarship on the early medieval mind.[78] Godden explains that the mind is described in texts from early medieval England to be 'residing in the heart or thereabouts', and also that body parts such as 'the *hreþer* [are seen] as the seat of the mind or place of thought and emotion'.[79] He lists the *modgeþoncas* in the *Maxims, The Wife's Lament* and *the Seafarer* as an example of the *mod* as thought, and similarly, the mind in the *breostum* in the *Maxims*, and in the *breostcofa* in *The Wanderer* illustrates the locus.[80] Mize looks at the Old English compound nouns for *mind* and initially asserts that many of them, such as *ferhðloca* and *hordcofa* refer primarily to the mind's corporeal seat —the bodily container for the mind— rather than to the mind itself.[81] As established earlier, it is likely that the second element of these compounds is the head, or in this case the container, and the first element specifies the type of container.[82] However, Mize demonstrates that the mind-compounds themselves indicate metaphorical use; he compares them to *tungolgimm*, 'star', literally 'heavenly-body-gem', and *sæfæsten*, sea, literally sea-firmament, which also have the second element as metaphoric head element, altered by a determinant. Comparing the nouns *modhord* and *breostcofa* to words like *lichord* (body-hoard) which is used to indicate body, and not the body's container, Mize adds that such compounds are frequently used in poetry to refer to the concept of the mind as container itself, instead of the location containing the mind, by extension of its metaphor.[83]

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[77] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 54., McIlwain, pp. 103-12.
[78] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind,* p. 25., Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 290., Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies,* p. 6.
[79] Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', p. 290.
[80] Ibid., pp. 290-91.
[81] Mize, 'The Representation', p. 63.
[82] See Chapter 1.2 'Latin and Old English Vocabulary for Mind'.
[83] Mize, 'The Representation', p. 67.

The ‘Mind as Container’ model dominates readings of many early medieval descriptions of minds. Soon-Ai Low has analysed what she considers to be metaphorical usage of the portrayal of the mind in the chest in ‘common-sense psychology’. The early medieval descriptions she cites articulate how ideas or emotions can bring on a physical sensation. Her list of metaphors is extensive and contains notions such as ‘Contraction and Expansion’, ‘Temperature, Burning and Liquid States’, ‘The Mind as Container’ and ‘The Mind as Body’. What she considers to be metaphors are often described in the sources texts in very physical terms. However, Low concludes that while many concepts of mind were likely considered physical entities, the concept of the ‘Mind as Container’ would probably not have been considered to have a literal place in the body.[84] Lockett has explored this idea of metaphor versus physicality in detail, based on the ‘Mind as Container’ model, developed by Lakoff and Johnson, and Low.[85] The ‘Mind as Container’ as Lockett describes it, is often also referred to as the ‘hydraulic’ model of the mind, because its behaviour resembles that of liquid in a container under the influence of heat. This model, primarily featured in Old English literature, encompasses several of the metaphorical concepts studied by Low and before Lockett, this model was predominantly identified as metaphorical.[86] Lockett explains that the container, an enclosed physical space in the midsection of the body, is where mental activity is described to occur. Intense mental activities or states, such as emotional distress, can produce heat in or near the container, which can begin to swell, boil and expand.[87] Similarly, the mind can be affected by mental cooling, which causes roominess in the container and stimulates normal functioning of the mind.[88] Lockett describes the dominant description of the mind as residing in the heart or chest, and enduring ‘increased temperature, size and pressure in conjunction with episodes of intense distress and desire’.[89] She argues that this model was not a metaphor to an early medieval audience. Her work on the medieval mind shows how the variety of descriptions locating the mind in the chest indicates that it is not interaction between mind and body that is referred to, but that the mind was literally seen as part of the body.[90] In *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, Lockett includes a detailed analysis of

[84] Low, *The Anglo-Saxon Mind*, pp. 52, 56, 79, 137, 184.
[85] Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), p. 165., Low, ‘The Anglo-Saxon Mind’, p. 55., Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 7-8.
[86] Lockett, Leslie ‘700–1050 Embodiment, Metaphor, and the Mind in Old English Narrative’, in *Part I: Representing Minds in Old and Middle English Narrative: The Emergence of Mind: Representations of Consciousness in Narrative Discourse in English* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), p. 46.
[87] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 57-59.
[88] Ibid., pp. 68-70.
[89] Lockett, ‘700–1050 Embodiment, Metaphor, and the Mind’, p. 46.
[90] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 54.

the descriptions and behaviour of the mind in the breast. This model will be taken into account as I consider descriptions from primary sources. Cardiocentric and hydraulic depictions of the mind are indeed widespread throughout early medieval literature, but particularly dominant in Old English poetry, in texts such as *Beowulf*, to which I will return in Chapters 3 and 4.

While there is evidence of descriptions and interpretations where the mind is situated in the chest, leading to the cardiocentric model, there are also early medieval English texts that locate the mind in the head, as has already been suggested by the maxims. In some cases, this clearly derives from a tradition of classical ideas about the mind, in which the mind is exclusively located in the head. Isidore of Seville explains:

> Prima pars corporis caput; datumque illi hoc nomen eo quod sensus omnes et nervi inde initium capiant, atque ex eo omnis vigendi causa oriatur. Ibi enim omnes sensus apparent. Unde ipsius animae, quae consulit corpori, quodammodo personam gerit.[91]
>
> The primary part of the body is the head, and it was given this name because from there all senses and nerves originate, and every source of activity arises from it. In it, all sensations become evident. Whence it plays the role, so to speak, of the soul itself, which watches over the body.[92]

Isidore speaks of the head, rather than the brain. He describes it as containing the senses, acting as the centre of nerves and activity, and as the interpreter of all sensations. Isidore's description comes very close to a modern portrayal of the brain. While his texts were influential in early medieval England, early medieval English people describe the brain somewhat differently. Whereas the medical books do seem to select the head as potential locus for the mind, as we will see below, the medical descriptions do not give the same detail about senses and nerve endings as Isidore does. The brain is occasionally mentioned in the leechbooks, which contain a mid-tenth-century collection of medical recipes, but its function is hardly discussed.[93] For example, *Leechbook I* contains a reference to skull fractures and recommendations on what to do if the brains are visible, but not on the function of the

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[91] Isidore of Seville, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi: Etymologiarum Sive Originum*, pp. 25-26.
[92] *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville,*, p. 232.
[93] 'Leechbook I and II' or 'Bald's Leechbook' in London British Library, MS Royal, 12 D 17., Peter Dendle and Alain Touwaide, eds., *Health and Healing from the Medieval Garden* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008), p. 146.

brain.[94] Similarly to the medical books, biblical texts or texts referring to the bible generally prefer the head as locus for the mind.[95]An example is found in *Adrian and Ritheus*, a late eleventh- to mid-twelfth-century text closely resembling *Solomon and Saturn*:[96]

> Saga me hwær byð mannes mod.
> Ic þe secge, on þam heafde and gæð ut þurh þone muð.[97]
>
> Tell me where a man's mind is.
> I tell you, in the head and it goes out through the mouth.

The mind is explicitly located in the head. Lockett explains that in this fragment the mouth is mentioned because 'the contents of a man's mind are put on display in the form of speech'.[98] Michelle Hoek, in her discussion of the *Soul and Body* poems, refers to 'a passage from the Gospel of Matthew [which] declares, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man: but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man (Matt. 15:11)"'.[99] Both Hoek and Lockett are concentrating on the metaphorical meaning of this type of fragment, but there is also potential for a more literal interpretation. The way the expression of the mind is phrased is interesting, as it suggests movement of the mind; it goes from inside the head through the mouth and outside to display and perhaps to vocalise itself. Is this indeed a playful metaphor for the mind's thoughts revealing themselves through speech, or is (part of) the mind literally leaving the body, perhaps at the point of death? Where does it originate? The message of this fragment is contrasted in the same text:

> Saga me feower stafas dumbe.
> Ic þe secge, an is mod, oðer geþanc, þridde is stef, feorðe is ægesa.[100]
>
> Tell me four mute letters.
> I tell you, one is mind, the second thought, the third is writing, the fourth is fear.

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[94] 'Leechbook I, I.15', *Leechdoms*, p. 2.
[95] 'Adrian and Ritheus', *The Prose* Solomon and Saturn, p. 145.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., p. 38.
[98] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 272.
[99] Michelle Hoek, 'Violence and ideological inversion in the Old English Soul's Address to the Body', *Exemplaria*, 10.2 (1998), p. 280.
[100] 'Adrian and Ritheus §38', *The Prose* Solomon and Saturn, p. 39.

Cross and Hill explain in their edition that this is a corrupt version of a fragment in the *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae*:

> Quae sunt tria muta, quae docent sapientiam in corde hominis?
> Est mens, oculis at littera.[101]
>
> What are three mute things that teach wisdom in the heart of man?
> They are the mind, eye, and letter.

Irina Dumitrescu asserts that this fragment describes the 'process by which written knowledge enters and is processed in the mind', and that '"letters" implies that cognition itself, with its emotional and intellectual processes, is textual'.[102] This provides a contrast with the previous mentioning of the mind; it is explicitly described here as mute instead of vocalised, as certain interpretations require; a vocalisation that was previously seen in the 'yelling' mind in *The Seafarer*. The source text also describes wisdom as located in the heart, which is omitted in *Adrian and Ritheus*. It thus seems to be a conscious choice of the author to locate the mind in the head, and perhaps it is the proximity between that situation and the mouth that vocalises and mobilises the mind. Yet, again, these texts provide complications, as it is not known what is meant to be interpreted metaphorically, or whether it is suggested that the 'content' of the mind goes out through the mouth.

The situation of the mind in the head seems to depend largely on genre and source-texts. McIlwain's research surmises that whereas the cardiocentric tradition is dominant in literary and religious texts, 'the evidence locates the Anglo-Saxon medical writings in the so-called encephalocentric tradition of Hippocrates and Galen, a position that considered the brain to be the master organ of the body and responsible for all mental and emotional experience'.[103] He explains that the head and brain are sometimes related to mental functions in Latin sources for early medieval medical texts, such as the *Practica Alexandri* and the *Liber Tertius*.[104] Lockett contends that, while these texts were selectively used and adapted, the cephalocentric doctrines were often ignored by compilers.[105] Similarly, as we have seen, Isidore of Seville identifies the head as the main part of the body and centre of the nervous

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[101] *The Prose* Solomon and Saturn, p. 154., '§175' *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae,* Martha Bayless and Michael Lapidge, eds., Scriptores Latini Hiberniae 14 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1998).
[102] Irina Dumitrescu, *The Experience of Education in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 44.
[103] McIlwain, p. 112.
[104] McIlwain, p. 105.
[105] Lockett, 'The limited role of the Brain', p. 42.

system, and Vindicianus describes the brain as marrow in the head.[106] However, the influence of those ideas on texts in early medieval England was minimal.[107] The traces of encephalocentric ideas in England are primarily present in medical writing: in *Leechbook II*

> Se maga biþ neah þære heortan y þære gelodr. Y geadortenge þam bræg[en]e of þam cumað þa adla swiþost of þær magan intingan y on yflum seawum wætan atterberendum.[108]
>
> The stomach is near the heart and the spine and in communication with the brain. From there violent diseases come, caused by the circumstances of the stomach, and evil liquids: venombearing humours.

The connection between the brain and heart is described, and the humours are mentioned as a factor in causing illness. Furthermore, the influence of the abdomen on the brain is made explicit, 'Sio wamb sio ðe bið cealdre oððe wætre gecyndo oððe misbyrdo. him cymð brægenes adl y ungewitfæstes him bið';[109] 'The stomach, which is of a cold or liquid nature or of imperfect nature; on that man comes disease of the brain and loss of wits'.[110] McIlwain used these examples to explain that this cold and moist nature refers to the relation between the mind and the humours.[111] The humoural theory appears in a range of early medieval texts, and some references suggest significant influence of the humours on the mind. This theory, which came to early medieval England through Greek and Roman writing, describes the four humours that are supposed to be balanced in the body.[112] According to this theory, humours could affect mental or bodily states when one of them is dominant. Most of the ideas on the humours can be found in the medical sources, especially with reference to blood-letting in order to balance the humours in the body by letting them out with the blood. The four humours are yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, and blood, which relate to the elements and seasons. Blood relates to air and spring, which as seen as moist and hot, yellow bile with fire and summer and therefore being hot and dry, black bile with earth and autumn, being dry and cold and phlegm with water and winter, which is cold and moist.[113] We have seen these four

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[106] McIlwain, pp. 105-6.
[107] Lockett, 'The Limited Role of the Brain', p. 42.
[108] 'Leech Book II, I' *Leechdoms,* II, p. 176.
[109] 'Leech Book II, xxvii' *Leechdoms,* II, p. 222.
[110] Ibid., p. 223.
[111] McIlwain, p. 108.
[112] Malcolm Cameron, *Anglo-Saxon Medicine*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 159-60.
[113] Ibid., p. 159.

elements in the description of what Adam is made of, but they create Adam's body in a different way than the humoral theory dictates. Fire here created Adam's hot blood, earth became flesh, water, in the form of cloud or dew created instability of *mod*, and sweat, and air, in the form of wind, became his breath. There are thus some inconsistencies in what the humours relate to. The medical books, most notably the *Leechbooks*, the *Lacnunga* and the *Herbarium*, compiled in the tenth century, contain recipes for the evil humour of the body, inflammatory blood and references to immoderate heat, cold, and dryness causing oppression of the chest.[114] This is important because it confirms that notions of the mind as physical part of the body were present in early medieval England, but also that the humours and thereby the mind could be influenced by medical treatment. The relationship between the mind and the humours is made explicit in *Leechbook II*, and it is described as observable by a doctor:

> Gif þonne sio lifre ahearðung y sio adl y sio ablawung biþ on þære lifre healcum y holocum gecenneð þonne þincþ him sona on fruman y sio wæte swiþon niþor gewite þonne hio upstige. y se mon geswogunga þrowað y modes geswæþrunga.[115]
>
> If, then, the liver grows hard and the disease and the inflammation spread to the corners and cavities of the liver, then the understanding quickly comes to the doctor that the humour descends downwards rather than ascends; and the man suffers fainting spells and failings of the mind.[116]

The brain is in Lockett's work mainly described to be of influence as the cause of mental disturbances in combination with the humours and especially with phlegm.[117] Her main argument is that the *mod* can be affected by the brain, just as it can be affected by other organs, but those are primarily located in the midsection of the body.[118] She describes how 'harmful humours emanate from the brain and derange the mind', instead of the other way around.[119]

The relation between the brain as locus for the mind and other organs is otherwise rather uncertain, and there is evidence that the mind was described to move through the body in some contexts. R.B. Onians explains that a relation between the spine, marrow and brain is

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[114] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 440., *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft*, I, II and III.
[115] 'Leech Book II, xxi' *Leechdoms*, II, p. 206.
[116] Cockayne translates 'ablawung' as 'upblowing', but given its connotations of 'flaring', I give 'inflammation' 'Leech Book II, xxi' *Leechdoms*, II, p. 207.
[117] Lockett, 'The Limited Role of the Brain', pp. 46-52.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., p. 39.

traceable to Pliny, who described marrow to be of the same nature as the brain, and that the head is affected when a man becomes frantic and mad. The marrow is then consumed by frenzy.[120] Indeed, the burning of the head is something that recurs in the medical books and for which there is a remedy: 'gewitlest Þæs modes, byþ ðonne heafod aweallen byþ', meaning witlessness of the mind, that is when the head is on fire.[121] Unfortunately, this reference does not give any more context of what exactly causes the head to be on fire, and it is therefore unclear if this is caused by an internal, emotional state or if it refers to a different type of physical symptom, such as a fever, for example. The phenomenon witlessness recurs in various kinds of source and I will discuss it in more detail in Chapter 3.[122] *Beowulf* poses another example of the mind in the head, as it is described that there is a 'hreþre under helme'; thus the *hreþre* is under the helmet, yet in *Beowulf* the mind also swells with breathing, suggesting a location closer to the lungs.[123] Lockett writes in 'The Limited Role of the Brain' that the medical evidence 'attributes to the brain a peripheral role in psychological activity but does not characterize the brain as the seat of the mod'.[124] She briefly considers the suggestion that the mod could be 'localized in many different bodily organs', but reasons that this 'would find absolutely no corroboration in other genres of Anglo-Saxon writing'.[125] However, I have already shown a clear distinction between the locus of the mind in medical writing and poetic literature. In the former, the mind is usually located in the head, and in the latter in the chest, but here are also plenty of inconsistencies within those texts. Furthermore, the mind has been described as going out through the mouth and even travelling over sea. In the same way as the soul was described as being in the brain, heart or in the blood, the location of the mind seems to shift as well, particularly when illness or potential harm is described: a point with particular significance for the present study. The mind and soul's described corporeality and locus are often of influence in scholars' determination of where specific texts belong in their constructed model. If these features of the mind are a changeable and unstable factor, this suggests that perhaps we should be examining descriptions of minds within a less rigid framework.

Just as there can be a division between parts of the unitary soul, which we saw in, for example, *De consolatione philosophiae*, the brain can also be described as being three-fold.

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[120] Onians, R. B., *The Origins of European Thought: About the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 148-50.
[121] 'The Old English Herbal XCVI' *Leechdoms*, II, pp. 210- 211.
[122] See Chapter 3.2 'Minds in Adulthood: Temporary States'.
[123] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 59, l. 1745., Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 39.
[124] Lockett, 'The Limited role of the Brain', p. 36.
[125] Ibid., p. 46.

An illumination from Gonville and Caius MS 428/428, which contains philosophical texts about nature and human life, portrays what appears to be a picture of the brain, in combination with the liver, heart and testicles.[126] The text accompanying the illumination reads: 'Principi palia membra virilia quatuor ad sunt', 'The primary members of a man, there are four'. The first, in the top left, 'Cerebrum', the brain or top of the head, is 'Frigidu(m) Humidu(m)', cold and wet, and consists of: 'Vita[..] [v]iteller Fantasia', meaning memoria, intellectus and fantasia. This is then followed by the liver, 'Epar.', which is 'Calidum humidu(m)', hot and wet, the 'Testicli' or testicles, which are 'Frigidi Humi(dum)': cold and wet, and the heart, or 'Cor', which is 'Calidu(m) Siccum', hot and dry. The brain is thus divided into three parts**:** *memoria,* or memory, at the back of the brain, *intellectus,* or intellect, in the middle and *fantasia,* imagination, in the front section. Brian McIlwain quotes an introduction derived from the *Peri Hereseon* by ninth-century bishop, Agnellus of Ravenna, and ultimately from Christian philosopher Nemesius of Emesa, which says of the rational faculties, 'imagination is in the front part of the brain, reasoning in the middle of the brain, which discerns good or evil, recall is in the back of the brain where memory resides'.[127] The illumination, then, represents ideas that have been present throughout the early medieval period, although their dominance in England during this time is not clear. Lockett traces Isidore of Seville's encephalocentric doctrines through Augustine to the Greek medical traditions, localising 'sensory processing in the front, motor control in the rear and memory in the middle'.[128] In Gonville and Caius, MS 428/428, the brain is described as cold and wet, in relation to the humours. Humoural theory connects, among other things, the humours with the seasons. This means that the brain relates to phlegm, with water and winter. In contrast, the liver is hot and wet, signifying air and spring, the testicles cold and wet, also relating to water and winter, and the heart is hot and dry, relating to fire and summer. There is therefore a stronger humoural relation between the brain and the testicles than between the brain and heart, confirming a relation, deriving from classical culture, described by Onians between the head and virility.[129] The brain as the locus of the mind and its connection with humours may not dominate early medieval descriptions of the mind in the same way as the heart and chest do, but they evidently do play a role, and especially in relation to ideas of health and illness.

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[126] See appendix, figure 1., *Illumination of the brain, liver, heart and testicles*, Cambridge, Gonville and Caius MS 428/428 Folio 50r.
[127] McIlwain, p. 106., also quoted in Lockett, 'The Limited Role of the Brain', p. 43.
[128] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 212.
[129] Onians, pp. 109-13.

Determining the described location of the mind in the body can help us understand better what concepts of mind were prominent in early medieval England and how they functioned. Present-day scholarly models often include indications of the mind's corporeality and locus, based on textual interpretations, genre and source text. While the most frequently elected location of the mind is in the chest, according to scholars such as Lockett, the head, or the brain appears in various genres as well. Descriptions adhering to the Mind as Container, or hydraulic model of the mind, or to the three-part division of the brain, which is influenced by the humours, show complex and sophisticated ideas were present concerning the functioning of the mind and the various elements that could influences it. While it is possible to say that the compliance to one model of the mind occurs more frequently in one type of genre or textual tradition than another, we occasionally see exceptions to this in the primary sources. Furthermore, in texts such as *Maxims I* and *Beowulf*, both the head and the chest appear to be of influence in mental activity and I have shown textual examples where the mind appears to change location, which makes it difficult to use these features in order to establish a model of the mind.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have laid out various aspects of early medieval thought on the mind, particularly in relation to philosophical traditions and ideas on physicality. Examining scholarly models of early medieval minds has confirmed that, while there are many excellent publications on early medieval minds, there is a fundamental problem in trying to capture early medieval minds in one scheme that concentrates on one norm with several set features. I have demonstrated that many of these scholarly theories have exceptions, and that reexamination of certain primary materials can lead to the necessity for expansion of present-day concepts of the early medieval mind and new insights into the behaviour ascribed to them. By tracing the traditions and features that scholarly models of the early medieval mind are based on, such as the Latin or classical versus the vernacular tradition, or the corporeality and locus of the mind, I have found that these models do not quite encompass all source descriptions and potential interpretations that can be discovered, and the patterns established are not always consistent. Not only is our understanding of early medieval thought about minds still too incomplete to attempt categorising and ordering the variations we see in different paradigms, but the findings in this thesis fundamentally resists categorisation.

In order to come to a more complete and nuanced understanding of what early medieval people considered their minds to be, and what they considered them to be capable

of, I propose to continue my exploration of descriptions of early medieval minds in all their appearances in the literature, rather than in the mould of a particular school of thought. My findings in this chapter lead me to conclude for the moment, that various concepts of mind were present at the same time and sometimes in the same texts in early medieval England. While certain concepts were more likely to be dominant than others in a specific type of source text, all descriptions of minds in the source texts should be incorporated in research on minds that wish to provide an accurate representation of ideas present. Therefore, moving on to consider variety, difference and change in descriptions of mind in early medieval England may be a new and potentially more fruitful line of enquiry. A notable feature in early medieval literature is that minds are described as being diverse. Conception of this will be enabled in further chapters as we let go of rigid models and paradigms, allowing what was seen as non-normative by early medieval people to be foregrounded. I will look at minds in different circumstances in the next chapter, and at minds that change. I will explore if there is a limit to what exhibitions of mental diversity were acceptable to the early medieval English, because certain descriptions of minds indicate that there is such a boundary, and that it is possible for minds to change into something undesired. By moving away from norms and models of the mind, and studying difference and diversity in early medieval literature, we can come to a more complete sense of how early medieval people understood their minds to work.

Chapter 3. Changing Minds in the Life Course

> Meotud sceal in wuldre, mon sceal on eorþan
> geong ealdian. God us ece biþ,
> ne wendað hine wyrda ne hine wiht dreceþ,
> adl ne yldo ælmihtigne;
> ne gomelað he in gæste, ac he is gen swa he wæs,
> þeoden geþyldig. He us geþonc syleð,
> missenlicu mod, monge reorde.[1]
>
> The Creator must be in Glory, man must be on earth,
> the young grow old. God is ours everlastingly,
> he does not change, nor is his being afflicted,
> by disease or age, the Almighty
> does not age in spirit, but he is still as he was,
> Lord of patience. He gives us thoughts,
> various *mod*, many languages.

This fragment from *Maxims I* shows a contrast between God, who is constant and unchanging, and people, who have individual *mod*; minds, and languages. Notably, the phrasing of the poem informs us first that thoughts are given by God, and only then that various *mod* exist; implying that those thoughts are perhaps not produced by the *mod*. The emphasis on God's unchanging nature suggests that, in comparison, humans and their spirits must be changeable and can alter with age. The use of the word *missenlicu*[2] implies diversity and variety of minds, or within minds. Were minds, according to this type of text, then considered different from each other or intrinsically changeable? This statement on the mind prompts a range of questions about early medieval beliefs on the nature, versatility and changeability of minds. In this chapter I aim to reexamine primary descriptions of minds in the life course and thereby uncover more potential readings of notions of diversity and changeability.

This research has so far analysed early medieval sources in conjunction with various scholarly models of the medieval mind. I have shown that attempts to create or reveal such a model oppose the concepts and presentations of minds described in the primary literature.

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[1] 'Maxims I', *The Exeter Book*, pp. 157, ll. 7-13.
[2] 'missenlic-ness' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: variety, diversity.

Several of the primary sources describe instability, or, as *Maxims I* suggest, variety and diversity as features of minds. As a homogenising approach in models of the mind has proved to be inadequate, I will now reconsider primary source material with the aim of removing frameworks and thus allowing any descriptions of diversity of minds to be exposed. This thesis will from here on be source-led, rather than model-led, potentially opening up revisionist readings of primary texts from a perspective that assumes that their variety cannot be reduced to models. The texts examined in this chapter can tell us more about how early medieval people in England considered their minds to behave throughout life. Many sources indicate that there was an understanding of mental diversity, and certain descriptions of minds indicate that there is a boundary between tolerable, and objectionable diversity. Ultimately, I intend for this chapter to demonstrate to what extent mental diversity was expected and acceptable to early medieval people. Once we reappraise the primary sources, allowing for the possibility that there is more than one concept of mind present, we are able to perceive changeability of minds according to circumstances, such as age, external pressure, education, and illness. In order to accurately represent the richness and diversity of early medieval minds, I draw from sources ranging from law codes to poetry and medical books, which describe contexts and conditions that affect or alter minds in a certain way. By examining primary source material without the limitations and set boundaries of scholarly models and paradigms, descriptions of diversity and change can be accommodated in our findings and a much broader range of descriptions of the mind can be considered than previous approaches permitted.

One example of an influential factor in the expectation of mental development by early medieval people is the movement through different ages and stages in their lives. Whereas a lot of scholarly research has been undertaken on medieval life cycles, and particularly on the Ages of Man schemas, only a small portion of this has been centered on the changes that take place in minds during life.[3] However, as this chapter demonstrates, there is evidence that early medieval English people expected their minds to change during their lifetime, and that these expectations were different for people from different ages, backgrounds or sexes. I begin this chapter by discussing some of the scholarly literature on the life cycle in early medieval England. Although the different ages and stages of life will be used as a framework for this chapter, I disagree with some of the assumptions and paradigms

[3] John A. Burrow, *The Ages of Man: A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), Isabelle Cochelin and Karen Elaine Smyth, eds., *Medieval Life Cycles: Continuity and Change.* International Medieval Research 18 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).

that are set by other scholars, and this discussion will enable me to clarify in what way the life cycle theories can be relevant to research on minds and mental changes. First, I will discuss descriptions of minds in childhood with particular focus on what was expected in the development of minds. Descriptions of the anticipated changes occurring in minds in youth, and exceptions to this, such as the mental development of Heremod in *Beowulf*, which appears to cause severe problems in his community, enable us to consider the expected process of ageing as well as the consequences of (a lack of) training and education. The second part of this chapter is a study of minds in adulthood. Here I discuss the difference in descriptions of minds in men and women, paying particular attention to health and illness and an examination of the use of vocabulary applied to women's minds as they experienced pregnancy. This part of the chapter leads me to ascertain that mental changeability in response to particular physical circumstances was sometimes anticipated. The texts I discuss imply that people were cautioned against aggravating these problems, or given advice to relieve it by means of diet, medicine or prayer. Such findings confirm not only that changes in the mind were acknowledged in early medieval literature, but also that they were considered to be of a temporary nature and that they could be resolved. The final part of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the maturity of minds that comes with age in early medieval literature. There appears to be an expectation for minds to develop and acquire the quality wisdom, which is frequently applied to figures such as Hrothgar in *Beowulf*. Yet descriptions of several characters in the same text indicate that this development can also occur at an earlier stage, triggered by other influences.

Ideas about change during the life cycle are prominent in early medieval literature. Schemes that demonstrate how the life cycle works appear in the works of, amongst others, the early medieval English authors Brythferth, Bede and Ælfric, who were influenced by the writings of Gregory, Isidore and Augustine, who I discussed in Chapter 1 and 2.[4] There was not one particular idea they agreed on, but they proposed various schemas consisting of three, four, five, six, or seven Ages of Man during life.[5] These set stages divided a person's life in phases that can be distinguished by certain characteristics and that have different names. For example, Isidore of Seville gives six ages, namely; *infantia* (ages 0-7), *pueritia* (ages 8-14),

[4] Burrow, p. 12, 16, 61, 81. Burrow gives examples such as Byrhtferth's diagrams in Oxford, St John's College MS 17 and London, Bede's *De Temporibus*, Ælfric's *De Temporibus Anni*, Gregory's Homiliarum in Evangelia Libri Duo, Isidore's *Liber Numerorum qui in Sanctis Scripturis Occurrunt,* and Augustine's De Diversis Quaestionibus LXXXIII and De Denesi contra manichaeos.
[5] Isabelle Cochelin, 'Introduction: Pre-Thirteenth-Century Definitions of the Life Cycle', in *Medieval Life Cycles,* p. 11.

adolescentia (ages 15-28), *iuventus* (ages 29-50), *gravitas* (ages 51-70), and *senectus* (no age limit).[6] The number of ages, or phases, are often interpreted to be inspired by other schemes and philosophies. The life cycle that has three ages is, for example, often related to the Holy Trinity, while four stages are associated with the four humours, the four elements, the seasons and so on.[7] Although these phases play a clear role in early medieval literature from England, in showing the expected development of a person during life and early medieval perceptions of ageing, there are several reasons why I hesitate to work with these schemas in my research on the mind in life stages and experiences. The most important is that, apart from some discussion of wisdom and knowledge, there is very little discourse about the mind or soul in these texts.

It is not just the mind and its development that are neglected in these schemas. Some of these connect certain ages to certain phases of the life cycle, but these ages and stages often vary in moment of onset and length and cause problems in determining which aspect of life is considered part of which phase. Scholarship gives some contradictory explanations for the varied ages that signify the stages in the primary life cycle literature. While John Burrow explains that the life cycle schemes do not really apply to monastic society, which was not based on age but on a completely different system of phases in spiritual development during a life, Cochelin argues that these schemes originate from a monastic environment in which these particular ages hold significance.[8] It is therefore difficult to draw conclusions about the origin or practical meaning of these stages. Furthermore, it is likely that the early medieval lifecycle schemes were written by and from the perspectives of male authors, and usually based on or applied to the male life.[9] A woman's lifecycle at this time would look very different from a man's and, although there are examples of such schemes, they are often based on her role in relation to men; the stages of her life are based on her fertility.[10] Apart from a few exceptions, scholarship has done little to acknowledge or expand this by including women's experiences.[11] Another notable issue is that there is no context given for the lives studied in the life-cycle schemes, indicating that it portrays the ideal, allegorical, or symbolic life, rather than a realistic life, or alternatively, the life cycle schemes only apply to a very

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[6] *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, p. 241.
[7] Elizabeth Sears, *The Ages of Man: Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle* (Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 12-15.
[8] Burrow, p. 96., Cochelin, p. 11.
[9] Cochelin, p. 2.
[10] Sears, p. 62.
[11] Neither Burrow nor Sears devotes much attention to this, even Sue Niebrzydowski, *Middle Aged Women in the Middle Ages*, Gender in the Middle Ages (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2011) is surprisingly uncritical of the absence of women in life-cycle literature.

small part of society. Looking at the ages given for various stages of the life cycle, these are evidently not based on the average life-span of an early medieval person, whose average life expectancy was probably somewhere between the ages of thirty-three and thirty-five.[12] Consider, for example, Byrthferth's cycle as described by Burrow, which presents four ages, ranging from birth until the age of seventy or eighty, yet most people would die before they reached even the middle of the third cycle (ages 28-48).[13] This is all reason to be critical and selective of the vast corpus of primary and scholarly writing on the lifecycle whilst attempting to shed light on the development and variety of early medieval minds throughout their lifetime.

For all the above considerations, I have decided not to structure my writing based on one of the life cycle schemes, but rather to take a chronological approach and focus on change in the broader division of childhood and youth, adulthood, and old age. I consider these divisions rough phases rather than firm categories, and where possible, I include examples of different sexes and environments. One of the advantages of studying early medieval life stages and experiences in this way, rather than any life cycle scheme, is that mental growth and development can be seen as fluid rather than static stages with characteristics that suddenly change as a person grows older and enters a new phase. Sally Crawford describes certain categories, such as 'youth', as overlapping with other phases, and, as I will show below, it seems that these transitional stages are particularly important in mental development.[14] The reason I do maintain a certain distinction between childhood, adulthood and old age, is that early medieval English texts indicate that people's minds are significantly different in these life stages, in such a way that it influences social relations, legal rights and responsibilities. I will specify the different life stages in this chapter, but also point out irregularities and problems I encounter while placing descriptions of minds within these sections.

3.1 Developing Minds in Childhood and youth

Perhaps unsurprisingly, there appear to be different expectations for children's minds than for adults in early medieval literature. Childhood in the life cycle literature is generally described as an age with many positive characteristics but also, emphatically, as a stage to be

[12] Sally Crawford, *Childhood in Anglo-Saxon England* (Sutton Publishing: Stroud, 1999), p. 129.
[13] Burrow, p. 20.
[14] Crawford, *Childhood*, p. 156.

outgrown.[15] I will consider some portrayals of children's minds that are described as exceptional or unexpected, concentrating on change and development. I am not committing to a full discussion of education, but I will rather look at the training and controlling of the mind itself, which is strongly emphasised as a requirement for children as well as adults. Exploring the portrayal of the character Heremod in *Beowulf* will give insight into the problems with categorising minds in different stages of life, and help to find out what features and changes in minds are anticipated or seen as acceptable. Heremod is portrayed as an erratic king, whose mental growth appears to be the cause of extreme emotions and destruction of his own people. The origins of the problems in Heremod's mind can help us determine what factors affect desirable behaviour of minds and their development. As the focus of this chapter is on changeability of minds, this section will clarify whether there are distinctions such as desired and undesired changes in minds.

The existence of the phase 'childhood' in the Middle Ages has been disputed in twentieth-century scholarly research.[16] While claims have been made by scholars such as Philippe Ariés, who believed childhood to be a post-medieval concept, Sally Crawford argues against such ideas and attests that this category is definitely recognised in the early medieval period. Crawford alerts us to the importance of recognising this in order to advance our understanding of early medieval culture.[17] She explains 'that "childhood" is a social construct rather than a natural one' and that apart from any biological features, the category 'childhood' is a reflection of adult society, through which it differentiates itself.[18] The ways in which adults describe the mental world of the children around them, is then a representation of those children as well as their own mental experiences. The existence of a distinction between the mind of a child and the mind of an adult has not frequently been debated, but there is evidence in the primary sources that indicate a change from children's cognitive processes in comparison to those in adulthood. Bede, in his retelling of the life of St Cuthbert, states,

> Cum enim esset paruulus, ut paruulus sapiebat, ut paruulus cogitabat, qui postmodum factus uir, plenissime ea quae paruuli errant deposuit. Et quidem

[15] Shu-Han Luo, 'Tender Beginnings in the Exeter Book Riddles', in *Childhood and Adolescence in Anglo-Saxon England,* ed. by Susan Irvine and Winfried Rudolf (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019), pp. 71-94 (p. 71).
[16] Philippe Ariès, *L' enfant et la vie familiale sous l' Ancien Régime* (Paris: Librairie Plon., 1960)., Crawford, *Childhood*, p. 2.
[17] Crawford, *Childhood*, p. 2.
[18] Ibid., p. 7-8.

> diuina dispensatio primitus elationem animi puerilis digno se pedagogo compenscere dignata est.[19]
>
> For when he was a child he understood as a child, he thought as a child; but after he became a man, he put away childish things entirely. And indeed the divine providence at first deigned to check the exuberance of his childish mind by means of a fitting teacher.[20]

This statement, closely related to Corinthians 13:11, expresses the existence of a different mental state in childhood.[21] Aside from commonplaces such as this, most descriptions of early medieval childhood appear in the corpus of hagiography, and usually describe the respective saints as extraordinary children worthy of sainthood. Descriptions of such children's minds are nearly exclusively focused on their capacity for faith and portrayed as a source of mature behaviour. The contents and capabilities of minds take precedence over descriptions of these minds themselves. There are, for instance, barely any indications of the features I discussed in Chapter 2, such as the corporeality and locus of the mind, in these contexts. Minds of such children in hagiography seem to be developed earlier than expected of children their age, and sometimes contain distinctive features. Burrow concludes from a description in Eadmer's *Life of Oswald*, that the young Oswald, while no longer a child, was made Dean at Winchester in preference of a much older man, suggesting that he, and other young saints, possessed a type of quality that does not necessarily develop with age.[22] Similarly, in his study of ageing minds, Corey J. Zwikstra refers to Ælfric's description of St Agnes and notes that despite her young chronological age, Agnes is old in mental age, based on this textual fragment, 'bilewit and snotor, cild-lic on gearum and eald-lic on mode'; 'innocent and wise, childlike in age but old in mind'.[23] Scholars thus agree that in various texts from early medieval England, people can be described as young in years, but old or developed in mental ability.

There are some brief descriptions across a variety of genres that shed light on what was expected of children's minds, and what was seen as extraordinary in them. Unfortunately, these are very few in number and contain very little detail. The minds of

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[19] 'Bede's Life of St Cuthbert', *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*: *A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), p. 156.
[20] Ibid., p. 157.
[21] Ibid., p. 36. Bede takes 1 Corinthians 13:11 as a source.
[22] Burrow, pp. 100-1.
[23] Corey J. Zwikstra, '"Wintrum Frod": Frod and the Aging Mind in Old English Poetry', *Studies in Philology*, 108.2 (2011), 133-64 (p. 151)., 'Natale sancte Agnetis, Virginis', *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, p. 170, ll. 8-9.

young children do not appear to have been a frequent subject of discussion, and only when the child develops towards adulthood do we see the ideas of the necessity of training the mind, as I will demonstrate below. One area in which children's minds are clearly distinguished from adults' is legal literature. The various law codes surviving from early medieval England mainly contain information on the obligations of parents and guardians towards children, but Ine, who was king of Wessex and produced a law code between 688 and 694, considered children mature and responsible enough to be an accessory to theft:[24]

> 7. [Be stale]
> Gif hwa stalie, swa his wif nyte 7 his bearn, geselle LX scill. To wite.
> 1. Gif he ðonne stalie on gewitnesse ealles his hiredes, gongen hie ealle on ðeowot.
> 2. x winter cniht mæg bion ðiefðe gewita.[25]
>
> 7. If anyone steals without the knowledge of his wife and children, he shall pay a fine of sixty shillings.
> 1. If, however, he steals with the knowledge of all his household, they shall all go into slavery.
> 2. A ten year old child can be [regarded as] accessory to a theft.

The first part of this law suggests that women and children share responsibility if they know of the criminal's intentions – perhaps because they did not keep him from stealing. The penalty for the thief and his family is far more severe in the case of their awareness, and the legal responsibility of children here is at least equal to that of mature women, if not to men. The second part of this law indicates that only a child or youth over the age of ten can be considered an accessory to, or literally a cognizant in, theft.[26] This law states when a child would be considered mature enough for legal accountability, in contrast to the first law, where apparently children of all ages share that responsibility. Neither this law, nor any of the other laws concerning children state anything about their minds, but what becomes clear is that there was considered to be a boundary separating immaturity and maturity, and that this is primarily based on awareness of, and ability to act on their parent's misdeeds.

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[24] Frederick Attenborough, ed., *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), p. 34.
[25] *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, p. 38.
[26] I have translated OE 'cniht' as child, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online* gives: 'cniht': *A boy, youth, attendant, servant, knight.*

The expectation implicit in this law code, namely that children's or youths' minds mature and change can also be found in a particular passage in *Beowulf*, one of the oldest poems in Old English and contained in the Nowell Codex.[27] The character Heremod appears in *Beowulf*, in one of the scop's stories, as a prefiguration and an example of bad kingship caused by problems in his development. The consequences of this are alarming. The Legendary case of King Heremod, which is relayed to Beowulf as a warning, implies that control over a mind can be lost completely, with disastrous results. The fragments of his story that are shared suggest that, through nobody's explicit fault, Heremod became greedy for treasure and so full of anger that he even killed his closest allies and table companions. Heremod provides an interesting and unusual case of mental development, as, what is said to be undesirable growth of his mind causes him to negatively affect his environment. Heremod appears as a contrasting example of a king who, unlike Hrothgar and possibly unlike Beowulf, does not display the characteristics of a mature ruler, and demonstrates the problems of growth and movement from one phase to the next. A key traditional responsibility of kings is reversed by Heremod, and instead of protecting his people,

> he his leodum wearð,
> eallum æþellingum to aldorceare.[28]
>
> He became to his people,
> To all the nobles, a lifelong concern.

The idea of a king becoming a burden or concern for his people is apparently intended as a warning for Beowulf, to show him what he needs to beware of. What is it exactly, that makes Heremod unable to care for himself and for his people? While 'aldor' in *aldorceare* can refer to the duration of the care, it can also suggest that his people and nobles are placed in the role of *aldor*; elders or older relatives. Therefore, an *aldorceare* could be someone needing to be looked after by elders or relatives – someone with a childish or transgressive mind. Later it is recalled how,

> ne geweox he him to willan ac to wælfealle
> ond to deaðcwalum Deniga leodum
> breat bolgenmod beodgeneatas

[27] Fulk, Bjork and Niles, eds., *Klaeber's* Beowulf.
[28] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 32, ll. 905-6.

eaxlgesteallan, oþ þæt he ana hwearf.[29]

He did not mature as they had hoped, but [grew up] for destruction
and for slaughter of the Danish people;
Enraged in mind he destroyed his table-companions,
Shoulder-friends, so that he was alone.

We do not know what age Heremod is here, but this clearly indicates a problem in a stage of mental development, probably in childhood or adolescence. Heremod does not *weaxan* – grow– as his people wished. Contrastingly, we have early in the poem heard the child Scyld be described to 'weox under wolcnum', grow under the sky or clouds, and he is explicitly described as a good king.[30] *Willan*[31] suggests that there is a wish among the people for a certain result, but not necessarily active involvement in Heremod's development by those people. This problem, then, appears to originate internally, in spite of external influences. The name Heremod contains, like many other names in *Beowulf,* a reference to minds in the compound *mod*. The element *here-* can be associated with 'army' or 'greatness', and this is what Heremod's mind seems set on. Heremod's *bolgenmod*[32] causes a sudden outburst of anger in which he kills the people who took care of him. His mind seems to have entirely become *bolgen*; swollen, and he is the embodiment of what is presumably an emotion such as anger. The swelling described can be imagined as the expansion involved in the hydraulic model or Mind as Container model, discussed in Chapter 2, where certain emotions produce heat and cause the mental container to react.[33] *Gebolgen* is a term that is also applied to Beowulf and to Grendel when they experience extreme emotional states, a key term which links Heremod's mental behaviour to prodigies as well as monsters, and indicates that others are capable of this mental state and embodiment of excess.[34] However, it is recalled that for Heremod, this is not an isolated incident but that,

hwæþere him on ferhþe greow
breosthord blodreow, nallas beagas geaf
Denum æfter dome, dreamleas gebad

[29] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 58, ll. 1711-14.
[30] Catherine Clarke, 'Re-placing Masculinity: The DC Comics Beowulf Series and its Context, 1975-6', in *Anglo-Saxon Culture and the Modern Imagination.* Medievalism 1, ed. by David Clark and Nicholas Perkins (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2010), pp. 165-82.
[31] 'willan' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: To will, wish.
[32] ′bolgenmod' *Boswoth Toller*: Enraged in mind.
[33] See Chapter 2.3 'The Location of the Mind'.
[34] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 26 , ll. 723.

> þæt he þæs gewinnes weorc þrowade.[35]
>
> Nevertheless, in his *ferhþe* grew to him
> the *bréosthord* bloodthirsty; he did not give rings at all
> to the Danes for glory. He lived joyless
> so that he suffered the battle's pain.

This passage indicates that there is development in Heremod's mind, but instead of the natural *weaxan* of Heremod that was expected, something now *greow* in his mind. As *bolgen* indicated, growth and expansion of or within the mind can be considered to be very unpleasant. Whereas *ferhþe* and *breosthord* are often translated as near-synonyms denoting mind, here we see the *breosthord* located within the *ferhþe,* and it is the *breosthord* that grew increasingly bloodthirsty and unruly. There is an implication that this growth could normally be constrained, but that it is now bursting out of the *ferhþe,* which again recalls the image of the hydraulic model of the mind; expanding with the heat of emotion. Although *blodreow* calls to mind the violent episodes described above, it now only leads to absence and passivity: Heremod lives a joyless existence and he does not give rings. He does not fulfil the regal custom of exchanging gifts, thereby severing bonds, which may ultimately lead to battle. The bloodthirst of the *breosthord* is described to lead to the hoarding of rings. There is a discernible parallel here with the dragon who later aggressively fights Beowulf, and who also hoards rings.[36] This connection perhaps suggests an inhuman quality in Heremod's mind. Heremod's tempers and his inclination to hoard are all tied to some sort of aberrant growth in or of his mind that his people could not prevent.

Heremod's state of mind raises questions about perceptions of normality in early medieval England, and of health and sickness. Is Heremod's mental development considered to be an illness, or is it, as I will explore shortly, regarded as a changing state that can be influenced by external factors? In Heremod's mind, *greow* suggests unnatural and unintentional development, rather than a deficiency. *Greowan* is found far less in the Old English corpus than the term *weoxan*.[37] *Greowan* does not always have negative connotations, but the term *weoxan* is frequently used for minds in an overwhelmingly positive sense. An example is given in St Guthlac's life: '[s]ymle Cristes lof in Guðlaces

[35] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 58, ll.1718b-21.
[36] See Chapter 4.4 'Non-human Minds: Animals'.
[37] 'greow' and 'weox' *The Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus*, ed. by Antonette diPaolo Healey, with John Price Wilkin and Xin Xiang (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2015) <http://doe.utoronto.ca/pages/index.html>.

godum mode weox ond wunade';[38] Christ's love did always grow and live in Guthlac's good *mod*. *Weox* may be required by alliteration here, but it would not have been applied if not deemed appropriate for this saint. In this quotation it appears that something grows in Guthlac's *mod*, whereas there are also examples where the *hyge* itself grows. Notably, it is specified that Guthlac has a *good* mod, where something positive grows, insinuating that there may be a possibility of bad minds as well, and potentially cultivating the opposite. A fragment from the verse *Solomon and Saturn* demonstrates this,

> Salomon cwæð:
> Æghwyl[cum men] engel onsendeð
> dryhten heof[ona] ðonne [dæg sty]reð;
> se sceall behealdan hu his hyge [wille];
> [grædig] growan in godes willan.[39]
>
> Solomon spoke:
> To whomever the Heavenly Lord
> sends an angel, he shall behold
> how his *hyge* will grow greedy by God's will.[40]

The *hyge* is described to be capable of growth, and this statement indicates that a type of self-reflection of the *hyge* is necessary to notice this, or suggests that there is something, other than the *hyge*, which can perceive and interpret. This makes the mind appear compartmentalised, and allows one part to grow independently of the other. Returning to *Beowulf*, Heremod is not alone in experiencing growth in his mind. Karen Bruce Wallace compares the use of the term *unhælu*,[41] which is applied to describe Grendel in *Beowulf*, to descriptions of his excessive physical size and behaviour. Wallace explains that it is not only the body that is described as excessive but that 'mental hælu could be disturbed by too little or too much emotion', and acknowledges the way that temperature and constriction would affect the size of the hydraulic mental container.[42] This analysis helps us to see that mental growth can be read as corporeal in nature, closely related to aspects of health and normality

[38] 'Guthlac A' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 49-88, l. 393.
[39] 'Solomon and Saturn II', in *The Old English Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn*, ed. by Daniel Anlezark (Cambridge: Brewer, 2009), p. 94, ll. 303-6.
[40] Translation informed by Anlezark, p. 95.
[41] 'un-hælu' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: I. bad health, disease, sickness, infirmity. II. misfortune, mishap.
[42] Wallace, p. 119.

by their comparative disproportion. Wallace also argues that the types of excess found in early medieval English literature is not limited to problematic figures. She states that the representation of the concepts of excess and of lack, 'serve to reveal the instability and artificiality of the central category of *hælu*, when they are juxtaposed with the saints and heroes who have monstrous characteristics that paradoxically testify to their integrity – their idealised humanity or their divinity'.[43] In the examples that I have given, there is a focus on development and change of mind, and a suggestion that this can lead to very different results, some desired, while others are cautioned against.

It is not certain at what stage in Heremod's development these mental problems first appeared, but the word *greow* implies that this occurred in a period of transition, and the concerned care from people around him suggest before adulthood. Alternatively, this description could indicate that even in his adulthood elders had to care for him when they normally should not have to, because his mind had developed in an undesirable way. The idea that a developing mind can be influenced or should be trained with a particular result in mind, is not uncommon in literature from early medieval England. *Maxims I* remind us,

> Lef mon læces behofað. Læran sceal mon geongne monnan,
> trymman ond tyhtan þæt he teala cunne, oþþæt hine mon atemedne hæbbe,
> sylle him wist ond wædo, oþþæt hine mon on gewitte alæde.
> Ne sceal hine mon cildgeongne forcweþan, ær he hine acyþan mote;
> þy sceal on þeode geþeon, þæt he wese þristhycgende.
> Styran sceal mon strongum mode.[44]
>
> An injured man needs a doctor. The young man should be taught,
> Strengthened and urged to know rightly, until he has been tamed,
> Give him food and clothing, until he be brought to exercise his reason.
> He must not be rebuked as a young child, before he may prove himself.
> He must be trained among people, so that he is firm of purpose.
> One must govern [with] a strong *mod*.

An obligation to train young men is expressed, to a point where they can exercise reason, are firm of purpose, and with the ultimate aim that they become able to steer with, or as Harbus

[43] Wallace, p. 126.
[44] 'Maxims I' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 156-63, ll. 46-51.

suggests, govern their own mind.[45] Harbus, Paul Cavill and T. A. Shippey all consider the similarities of the final sentence with 'Stieran mon sceal strongum mode' in the *Seafarer*.[46] Cavill and Shippey differentiate between the two by translating the *Maxims* with '[o]ne steers [rules] by means of a strong mind' and the *Seafarer* '[a] headstrong spirit must be controlled'.[47] Indeed, this final sentence of the *Maxims* has also been translated with, '[o]ne must discipline an impetuous mind', despite the likelihood that *mode* is a dative singular and *strongum* a dative plural.[48] The term *styran* itself indeed connotes steering and ruling, but it also connotes correction,[49] and while the term *stieran* only yields the definition 'to correct' in Bosworth and Toller's dictionary, the *Thesaurus of Old English* includes steering and guidance as well.[50] In the context of learning, which this fragment from the *Maxims* appears to be about, perhaps associations of correction of the mind are just as valid as those of governing with the mind.

This description from *Maxims I* is full of further complications and contradictions. First of all, we do not know what age group needs to be trained, as 'young men', 'a young child', and 'mon' –which could be intended to mean 'one'– are all mentioned. The young child needs to give permission; does he need to show that he is ready to learn? Is this instruction specifically aimed at men or is masculine just the default gender to be used here? The maxims claim that the minds of young men can develop under guidance, and the purpose of teaching is not to transfer knowledge from one mind to another, but to pass on the skills to govern with a strong mind. The main, seemingly contradictory, purpose is that someone can be tamed in order to strengthen his own *mod*. The first sentence of this passage shows that it is of equal importance to train a young man's mind as it is for the sick to see doctor. Judith Kaup interprets this so that 'the underdeveloped [mind] is described as not only a deficiency but an illness'.[51] I think this interpretation somewhat simplifies the matter, because this text also indicates that there is an untrained state of a person, which is the opposite of the trained state, and it does not indicate illness but a natural childlike state. This state includes not

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[45] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 74.
[46] 'The Seafarer', *The Exeter Book*, pp. 143-47, ll. 109a.
[47] Paul Cavill, *Maxims in Old English Poetry* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1999), p. 75.
[48] Brian O' Camb, 'Bishop Æthelwold and the Shaping of the Old English Exeter Maxims', *English Studies* 90.3 (2009), 253–73 (p. 259).
[49] 'ge-styran' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: To steer, direct, rule, correct, restrain, withhold.
[50] 'ge-stieran' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: To correct., Jane Roberts and Christian Kay with Lynne Grundy. 2017. *A Thesaurus of Old English*. Glasgow: University of Glasgow. <http://oldenglishthesaurus.arts.gla.ac.uk/> [accessed 1 April 2019]: 05.12.01.09|04 v To go, progress, travel (usually on land): To travel on water: To steer stīeran. 07.05.01|06 v Censure, reproof, rebuke: To chide, reprove, rebuke (ge)stīeran.
[51] Kaup, p. 201.

knowing what is right, not being able to exercise reason, and not being firm of purpose as the key characteristics. This is something we can recognise as a description of childhood. These notions seem plausible reasons informing the laws of King Ine, who decided that young children cannot be held responsible for their parent's crimes. It does not seem that this unpolished and untrained state of mind and mental skill was frowned upon or considered a deficiency, but rather that it was seen as natural until the point that adulthood is reached.

The word *atemedne*,[52] tamed or subdued, also indicates effort by the community to control or rein in something by consent in its usage in *Maxims I* and *Beowulf*, rather than forcing development. In the case of Heremod, the problem is not, or perhaps not only, a lack of acquisition of knowledge, but there is flawed growth in his mind itself, and it is not reasonable or purposeful, nor is it controlled.[53] We do not know what training Heremod's mind received. His people witnessed his development, and hoped for certain results, which suggests their involvement in his upbringing and wellbeing. It would unhelpful to speculate where, exactly, Heremod's mental problems originated, or how they came to be. Nor would it be helpful to speculate whether his training or community failed in any way, because we do not have enough information about him to draw such conclusions. However, there is a clear perception that significant problems in minds such as his arise in the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, and his development did not meet his people's hopes and expectations. Furthermore, the language used to describe the origin of his outbursts invariably refers to the problems of his mind, in a rather physical way. This denotes the problematic growth of certain parts of mind, the *breosthord*, and the expansion with *gebolgen*. There is no indication of whether Heremod has any personal evil intentions but rather it seems that this is happening *to* him, and he is even described as a victim, because he ultimately *wærc þrówade:* suffered pain. Because Heremod is described as an *ealdorceare*, perhaps we can assume that he never reached the stage where he could govern his own mind and that he is stranded in this transitional phase.

3.2 Minds in Adulthood: Temporary States

Returning to the various references made to men's minds in the maxims; it is difficult to determine if there was a distinction made between male and female mental development in

[52] 'a-temian' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: To tame thoroughly, make very tame or gentle, to subdue, tame.
[53] For an analysis of the relationship between Heremod and knowledge, or 'sapientia', please see Robert E. Kaske, '"Sapientia et Fortitudo" as the Controlling Theme of "Beowulf "', *Studies in Philology*, 55.3 (1958), 423-56.

childhood.[54] Words for *boy* are much more frequently used than the terms for *girl* throughout the corpus of literature but there is little information given about the minds of either sex. Children are otherwise frequently discussed with the term *cild* or *bearn*, which can signify either sex. The lack of information on children's minds means that it is even more difficult to see what types of features and changes are distinguished for the different sexes throughout their lifetimes. We can assume that the differences between girls and boys are clearest in the final stage of childhood, as adult women and men are sometimes described to have different types of mind, and as this is a moment in which problems of development, as seen in Heremod's mind, become apparent. In the Old English poem *The Wife's Lament*, the female narrator describes her own and her lover's mind,

> for þon is min hyge geomor.
> Ða ic me ful gemæcne monnan funde
> heardsæligne, hygegeomorne,
> mod miþendne, morþor hycgendne.[55]
>
> Therefore my mind is sorrowful.
> When I found a very suitable man for me,
> [he was] unfortunate, sorrow-minded
> concealing his mind, contemplating murder.

The narrator describes that the state of her mind is now similar to his, both their *hyge* are termed *geomor*;[56] his was already sad before a particular event, and hers after. *Ða* could potentially be translated as either 'when' or 'then'. 'When' suggests that the woman's state of mind is the result of this relationship, but if we read 'then', her sorrowful mind appears to draw her into this relationship. Harbus comments that it seems to be their minds, rather than themselves, which are 'weary, sad, or full of cares', and yet this appears to be a direct result of the circumstances they are in.[57] The qualities of mind that the narrator describes in her lover are not a problem to her and they even appear to make this man a suitable match for her. Yet apparently, his actions are not acceptable to their community, as she later states,

> A scyle geong mon wesan geomormod,
> heard heortan geþoht; swylce habban sceal

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[55] 'The Wife's Lament', *The Exeter Book*, pp. 210-11, ll. 17-20.
[56] 'geomor' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Sad, sorrowful, mournful.
[57] Harbus, *The life of the Mind*, p. 134.

> bliþe gebæro, eac þon breostceare,
> sinsorgna gedreag.[58]
>
> The young man shall always be sorrow-minded
> [with] hard heart's thought; such must have
> a cheerful bearing, at the same time as the breast-troubles
> and continual troubles.

It appears from these statements that young men, or this man in particular, was thought to have a mind prone to much grief, yet have a cheerful bearing. While the narrator clearly describes her own sadness to be the result of an experience, her husband's grief is described as a natural part of youth. The poem does not give any context or reason for this state of mind, but sadness is described as a typical and permanent feature in his young mind.

Women's Minds: Changing during Pregnancy

Sally Crawford explains that transitions from childhood to adulthood in the medieval period are socially constructed to be shorter for women and more problematic for scholars to trace than those of men.[59] A reason given for this is that girls often took on tasks normally carried out by adult females from a young age, but at an age not fixed or identified in the literature, which makes the onset of adulthood a difficult moment to determine.[60] The transition from childhood to womanhood is not the only influence on a woman's mental development, but the literature also indicates that changes in a woman's mind take place during pregnancy. While there are a number of primary sources that describe pregnant women's mental experiences, these have generated little scholarly interest. The language used to describe women's minds in primary source texts, such as *The Formation of the Foetus*, as they go through the bodily and emotional changes surrounding pregnancy, is particularly striking. My searches for scholarly sources on experiences of early medieval pregnancy rendered nearly no results, with some exceptions regarding obstetrics, some charms, and prognostics relating to childbirth.[61] I will consider a few more sources now in order to demonstrate that early medieval people believed that pregnant women were capable of influencing the mental state of their foetus and that women's own minds changed fundamentally during pregnancy.

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[58] 'The Wife's Lament', *The Exeter Book*, p. 210-11, ll. 42-45.
[59] Crawford, *Childhood*, p. 166.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Peter Murray Jones, and Lea T. Olsan. 'Performative Rituals for Conception and Childbirth in England, 900-1500', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 89.3 (2015), 406-33.

Several early medieval sources, such as the leechbooks, indicate that a mother's diet and behaviour during pregnancy could influence the foetus. In addition to recommendations on how to avoid the loss of a child, the pregnant woman could positively affect the foetus' physical and mental development;

> Eft oþer wise gif wif biþ bearn eacen feower monoð oþþe fife & heo þonne gelome eteð hnyte oþþe æceran oþþe ænige niwe bleda þonne gelimpeð hit hwilum þurh [&] þæt [&] þæt cild biþ disig.[62]
>
> It is another matter if a woman is pregnant four or five months and she then frequently eats nuts or acorns or any new fruit then it happens sometimes that that the child is stupid.

The mother's diet directly influences her child's mind, or mental development. The word *disig*[63] can indicate several different meanings, ranging from ignorance, to stupidity and from foolishness to dizziness. Irina Metzler studies this word in the context of the diverse lexicon for various types of intellectual disability in the middle ages, and suggests that the application of it to an unborn child makes it likely that this signifies a mental disability.[64] The months where the mother's diet is a concern are specified, so perhaps the child is only in danger of developmental problems during this period. The woman's diet clearly influences her child's health and future cognitive capacity. On the other hand, Ælfric of Eynsham wrote that a mother could influence her child's health with her mental abilities rather than her actions:

> Seo moder þa dreorig bær þæs cildes lic to þam foresædum gemynde þæs halgan stephanes. and hit sona geedcucode and ansund æteowode.[65]
>
> The mother who bears the sick child […] should hold in mind the holy Stephen and it will soon come to life again and appear unhurt.

It may be St Stephen rather than the mother, who has power over the wellbeing of the foetus, but the word *gemynde*; remembered or 'held in mind', emphasises the need to utilise her

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[62] 'MS Cotton Tiberius A III. Fol. 40b' *Leechdoms* Vol. III, p. 144.
[63] 'disig' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Dizzy, foolish, unwise, stupid.
[64] Irina Metzler, *Fools and Idiots? Intellectual Disability in the Middle Ages (*Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), p. 36.
[65] 'UII. Kalendas. Ianuarii. Natale Sancti Stephani Protomartyris' *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS S.S. 5 (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 12-19 (p. 13), ll. 54-56.

mind for this. The word ‘geedcucode’ indicates that the child was already considered to be alive and quickened, therefore, it must have died after the quickening as she is said to resurrect it. The reason St Stephen is called on is possibly related to his abilities in other texts, where this particular saint heals and resurrects several people.[66] Both the saint and the mother’s mind are required to perform this particular miracle.

In addition to recommendations for active physical and mental contributions to the health of their child, women are also warned against thoughtlessness in this preaching text, *De infantibus non baptizandis*:

> Warnige eac seo modor þonne heo mid cilde gæð þæt heo mid nanre higeleaste hit ne amyrre. ne mid nanum hefe ne mid nanum plegan. oððe mid rade. oððe mid ænigum ungerade.[67]
>
> Also warn the pregnant mother to be careful that she does not destroy her child through any thoughtlessness, nor through any heavy lifting, nor any playing, nor through horse-riding or through any foolishness.

This warning predominantly repeats the need for the mother to abstain from heavy physical activity, but there is also an indication that some problems would not just originate from thoughtlessness or foolishness, but that it can be the thoughtlessness or foolishness itself that does the damage. The word ‘higeleaste’ can be translated as folly, thoughtlessness, or, literally, as mindlessness. This warning suggests that thoughtlessness and foolishness are recognised both as dangers *and* as the cause of dangerous actions occurring during pregnancy.

While certain external factors, as well as inherent dangers in a pregnant woman’s mind are implied to endanger herself and her child, there also appears to be a relationship between the stages of the pregnancy and changes that occur in a woman’s mind, described in certain medical sources. *The Formation of the Foetus*, a short Old English text contained in an eleventh to early twelfth-century manuscript, takes us through these stages and the influence of the pregnancy on the woman and foetus. According to this text, the child only gains a soul in the fifth month, which is described as the quickening:

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[66] *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church. The First Part, containing the Sermones Catholici or Homilies of Ælfric*, ed. by Benjamin Thorpe, 2 vols (London: Taylor: 1844-6), I., pp. 25-37.

[67] ‘De infantibus non baptizandis’, in ‘Ein Altenglishes Leben des Heiligen Chad’, ed. by Arthur Napier, *Anglia*, 10 (1888), 131-56 (pp. 154-55).

> On þam feorþan monþe he biþ on limum staþolfæst. On þam fiftan monþe he bið cwicu. 7 weaxeð. 7 seo modur lið witleas. 7 þonne þa ribb beoð geworden. þonne gelimpð þæræ manigfeald sar þonne þæs byrþnes lic on hire innoþe styrigende bið.[68]
>
> In the fourth month he is steadfast in his limbs. In the fifth month he is quickened and grows and the mother suffers witlessness. And then the ribs come into being. Then many pains occur when the burden of the body in her womb is moving.

There is physical pain and discomfort for the woman when the foetus grows and moves. The fifth month seems to be a crucial stage, as it is also the moment where the woman can prevent her child from becoming *dysig*: stupid. At the same time that the child gains a soul, the mother becomes *witleas*:[69] witless. There seems to be a direct correlation between these occurrences, and we can assume that before this moment, the woman was not *witleas*. *Witleas* might refer to her unawareness of the development her child is going through at the same moment. However, it can literally be translated as 'without wits'; this seems to indicate an undeveloped mind, or a mind that had wits and lost them. Witlessness occasionally appears in the medical books as an illness that can be cured by using recipes.[70] Notably, the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus* yields forty-three attestations to a search for the word *witleas* across the entire corpus, in a variety of contexts, some of which particularly affect women.[71]

The term *witleas* and its definition invite a comparison to certain symptoms described by present-day pregnant women. These symptoms include changes in cognitive functioning, absent-mindedness and reduced memory, which are presumed to be the result of hormonal changes in a woman's mind, and which are frequently referred to with the ambiguous diagnosis 'baby brain'.[72] While there are medical studies that indicate that these symptoms are indeed commonplace in pregnant women and that pregnancy does affect their cognitive functioning, others question whether the findings in such studies are the result of social

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[68] 'A New Edition of the Old English "Formation of the Foetus"', ed. by Lászlo Sándor Chardonnens, *Notes and Queries*, 47 (2000), 10-11, (p. 11).
[69] 'witleas' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Witless, senseless.
[70] See the recipe quoted in Chapter 2.3 'The Location of the Mind', from 'The Old English Herbal XCVI' *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft*, II, p. 210- 211.
[71] 'witleas' *The Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus*.
[72] Sasha J. Davies and others, 'Cognitive impairment during pregnancy: A meta-analysis', *Medical Journal of Australia*, 208.1 (2018), 35-40.

stereotypes, rather than the impact of biological changes.[73] The various effects of pregnancy on the functioning of minds are still subject to scientific observation, and medical diagnoses for these can still be unstable and are often the subject of dispute.[74] As I explained in earlier chapters, it is particularly difficult to retrospectively diagnose cases where the medieval or the modern diagnosis is somewhat undefined. Drawing a parallel between the effects of witlessness and having 'baby brain' would mean comparing two unstable diagnoses, which cannot lead to a sophisticated or helpful conclusion for the aims of this project. Furthermore, as I will note below, the term *witleas* is also applied in early medieval English texts to people who are not pregnant, broadening its definition even further and complicating any potential comparison. Nevertheless, what can be stated at this point is that according to some primary source texts, some early medieval women experienced witlessness during their pregnancy, and that there appeared to be a relationship between that state of mind and the development of their child.

Aside from women who experience witlessness during pregnancy, there is also an indication that witlessness can persist after childbirth. A striking description of such a woman's witlessness appears in Ælfric's homily *On Auguries*, in which several practises are described and warned against,

> Eac sume gewitlease wif farað to wega gelætum and teoð heora cild þurh ða eorðan and swa deofle betæcað hi sylfe and heora bearn.[75]
>
> Also some witless women go to the road and drag their child through the earth, and the devil takes herself and her child.

Winfried Rudolf compares this to another reference to dragging children through the earth, which is also combined with references to devil-worship.[76] Rudolf considers the possibility that this refers to the murder of children or to pagan practice, but rather argues that this combination of references is strategic, in order to rhetorically 'demonise the custom' of dragging a child through the earth, whether this originated in pagan practice or not, and

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[73] Ibid., Madeleine Pownall, Mark Conner, Russell R. C. Hutter, 'The effects of activating a "baby brain" stereotype on pregnant women's cognitive functioning', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 51.8 (2021), 809-24.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ælfric, 'De Auguries' *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, I, pp. 364-82 (p. 374).
[76] Winfried Rudolf, 'Anglo-Saxon Preaching on Children', in *Childhood and Adolescence in Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, ed. by Susan Irvine and Winfried Rudolf (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), pp. 48-70 (p. 61-3).

whether the purpose was to kill the child or not.[77] John Frankis compares this fragment to a corresponding fragment found in the Old Norse *Heimslysing*, which indicates this ritual was actually performed to improve the health of the child. Notably, the Old Norse text does not refer to the woman's mental state.[78] Rather than informing us of her purpose, the term *witleas* in Ælfric's text informs us of the woman's state of mind, taking precedence over her following a custom or worshipping the devil. Whatever the reason may be for dragging a child through the earth, *witleas* in this situation does not show reason, purpose or maternal intentions. Rather, such occurrences of *witleas* suggest a reading of the term as a type of illness may be appropriate. The mental state of this woman is foregrounded so that it appears to determine her behavior, even if we do not know for certain whether she indeed has come to this state through a pregnancy.

Returning to *The Formation of the Foetus* with more information of witlessness in mind, it is still difficult to draw conclusions about the causes of the dangers she is warned for during her pregnancy. The passage describes the standard or typical development of the foetus, and therefore also the expected changes experienced by the mother. Is the passage suggesting that in becoming witless, the pregnant woman moves to a state similar to her child as a sign of the child's development? If this is the case, the foetus influences her development just as much as she influences him. As the child grows in *The Formation of the Foetus*, the woman is conscious of what will happen at this late stage:

> On þæm syxtan monþe he byþ gehyd. 7 ban beoþ weaxende. On þam seofoþan monþe þa tan. 7 þa fingras. beoð weaxende. On þam eahtoþan monþe him beoð þa breostþing wexende. 7 heorte. 7 blod. 7 he bið eall staþolfæstlice. geseted. On þam nigoþan monþe witodlice wifum bið cuð hwæðer hi cennan magon.[79]
>
> In the sixth month he has skin and the bones are growing. In the seventh month the toes and the fingers are growing. In the eighth month the organs of the breast are developing and heart and blood and is completely steadfast positioned. In the ninth month, the woman will know whether she can bring forth.

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[77] Ibid, p. 62.
[78] John Frankis, *From Old English to Old Norse: A Study of Old English Texts Translated into Old Norse, with an edition of the English and Norse versions of Ælfric's De Falsis Diis*, Medium Ævum Monographs 33 (Oxford: Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 2016), 71-80.
[79] 'A New Edition of the Old English Formation of the Foetus', p.11.

The breast and heart, in other sources described as the seat of the mind, only develop in the eighth month. The woman will somehow know if she can give birth in the ninth month. Emphasis here is placed on her mind rather than her body, so if she is still witless, she is not completely without mental capacity. The text ends with another warning:

> On þam teoþan monþe þæt wif hit ne gedigð hyre feore. gif þæt bearn accenned ne biþ. forþam þe hit in þam magan wyrð hire to feorhadle oftost on tiwesniht.[80]
>
> In the tenth month the woman will not escape with her life if the child has not been born. Because it becomes a fatal illness in her belly, most often on a Monday.

There was nothing to be done when a child had not been born by the tenth month. As it is described here, the child seems to no longer be considered a child, but to transform into an illness that kills the mother. What becomes clear in this text is that there is correspondence between the mother and the foetus. Whereas the foetus appears to grow on its own accord, and according to the calendar, the mother seems to react to the developments of the foetus. This contrasts the pattern indicated in the leechbooks and *De infantibus non baptizandis* above, where the mother's activities influence the foetus.

We can gain a clearer idea of what was expected to happen in a normal pregnancy by noting what was highlighted as divergent from the norm in a case of an exceptional pregnancy. In the retelling of the Virgin Mary's conception, in one of Ælfric's homilies, *De natale domini,* several things are addressed that are different with this pregnancy than other pregnancies. Mary had an exceptional pregnancy, and the mentioning that something did *not* happen to Mary makes it sound unexpected that she did not experience this. One example is the explicit statement that she does not become listless or lose joy,

> Ne unlust on hire mod ne becom. ne heo weres ne breac. þa wæs heo for ði mæden þeah ðe heo cild hæfde.[81]
>
> There came no listlessness to her mind. Nor did she lose human joy. She was still a virgin yet she had a child.

[80] Ibid.
[81] 'De Natale Domini' *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies*, pp. 3-11, (p. 5), ll. 81-83.

Unlust[82] is occasionally mentioned in relation to pregnant women in other contexts. It often refers to the lack of appetite, but 'unlust on hire mod' would better be interpreted as some type of mental listlessness. *Unlust* apparently occurs more frequently during pregnancy, but it is not a problem that remains for the mother:

> swa swa wif acenð bearn and þrowað micel earfoðu æfter þam ðe heo ær micelne lust þurhteah.[83]
>
> During childbirth the pregnant woman experiences a lot of pain, but afterwards she regains vigour.

The 'lust' then, normally returns after the discomfort of pregnancy and pain of childbirth. To summarise, *witleas, higeleaste*, and *unlust* all refer to deterioration in the mind in different ways, and specifically to the loss of something relating to the mind. The mother's mind is decreasing while the foetus grows, and although there are indications that 'lust' returns, some women remain or become *witleas* after giving birth. While the pregnant women described seem to lose aspects of their mind, they are actively engaged with diets, charms, active mental care for, and a certain knowledge about the child.

Whereas there is much to indicate that according to the selected texts, pregnancy reduces or disables the mind, there are other sources that indicate that a type of knowledge can be gained through pregnancy. Women's minds are frequently described as a receptacle for dream visions. There are several well-known examples of pregnant women receiving dream portents in early medieval hagiography. The first is Abbess Hild's mother Breguswith, who, according to Bede, is said to have dreamt during her pregnancy that,

> Verum cum sollertissime illum quaesierit, extimplo se repperire sub ueste sua monile pretiosissimum, quod, dum attentius consideraret, tanti fulgore luminis refulgere uidebatur, ut omnes Brittaniae fines illius gratia splendoris impleret. Quod nimirum somnium ueraciter in filia eius, de qua loquimur, expletum est,

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[82] 'Unlust' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: I. absence of desire, disgust, disinclination. a. want of appetite. b. disinclination to action, listlessness II. want of pleasure, joylessness, weariness.

[83] *The Old English Boethius*, Vol. 2, p. 306, ll. 10-12.

> cuius uita non sibi solummodo sed multis bene uiuere uolentibus exempla operum lucis praebuit.[84]

> […] suddenly, in the midst of her search, she found a most precious necklace under her garment and, as she gazed closely at it, it seemed to spread such a blaze of light that it filled all Britain with its gracious splendour. This dream was truly fulfilled in her daughter Hild; for her life was an example of the works of light, blessed not only to herself but to many who desired to live uprightly.[85]

According to Bede, this symbolic dream predicts to Breguswith her daughter Hild's pure and exemplary life to come. The dream and the jewel are described in terms that are unmistakably positive and possibly divine. Another example is a dream of the wife of Wilgils, who dreams of swallowing light like a full moon when she is pregnant with the Bishop Willibrord in Alcuin's retelling.[86] Again, splendour and light are part of this description. Then there is Aebbe, who before the birth of her daughter, the abbess Leoba, dreams of removing a bell from her bosom in an account by Rudolf of Fulda.[87] There are other stories that tell us about mothers receiving signs, but these are often visible to everyone and take place in the external world, rather than in the internal experience of the mother. The dream itself could be, and is often interpreted as having been sent by God to make the dreamer aware of the unborn child's importance, rather than being a product of the mother's mind. Clearly, these women's minds were deemed receptive and permeable, like their fertile bodies. They are presented as an appropriate place to receive such important messages but strangely, the receivers are not always capable of understanding them.

Early medieval texts tell us that understanding dreams can be quite a challenge. In *Daniel*, Nebuchadnezzar receives dreams, but he needs Daniel to interpret the meaning of these dreams for him. It takes a particular suitability to receive, and another to understand dream visions. The meaning of Willibrord's mother's dream is interpreted by a priest, but

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[84] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People,* ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 410,
[85] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 411.
[86] Vita Sancti Willibrordus 1.2 , *Monumenta Alcuiniana,* ed. by Philipp Jaffé, Wilhelm Wattenbach, Ernst Dümmler, eds. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1873), VI, pp. 40-43.
[87] Rudolf of Fulda, 'Vita Sanctae Leobae', ed. by Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH S.S. XV (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1888), I. 12., Translated by C. H. Talbot, *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany* (London: Sheen and Ward, 1954).

Aebba's dream is interpreted by a nurse, and Breguswith's dream retrospectively by Bede.[88] The dream, then, is sent to the expecting mother, but others need to be involved to understand and fully deliver it, not unlike the child itself. Men frequently receive and act upon dream visions in early medieval literature; Caedmon, the dreamer in the *Dream of the Rood*, and the emperor Constantine are just a few examples of these. However, I have found no equivalents where a father receives a dream portent about his child. Perhaps a dream vision requires a certain type of mind for it to be received, but then why would the mother be the person to receive the dream if she is not capable herself of interpreting this vision? One possible reason is her proximity to the child, but she will not necessarily have much influence on its upbringing once it is born. Even though, or perhaps because pregnant women's minds seem to suffer from loss of wits, apparently, they become a suitable recipient for these messages. The holiness of the child is implied to be the explanation for the dreams, and from this it follows that the woman's perception of God is influenced by the foetus. This is congruent with the foetus that generated witlessness: both occurrences imply a model in which a foetus can affect the mother's mind, in positive and negative ways.

Minds Affected by Illness

Many of the sources I have discussed in this chapter so far show that, in the primary literature, there is a certain perceptiveness in minds that allows them to take on mental states, or to experience phenomena caused by very specific circumstances. There is advice to learn to steer the mind while young, or else the possibility for the wrong kind of mental growth is furnished, there are indications that women can become witless, specifically in the fifth month of their pregnancy, and dream portents have an opportunity to make themselves known when a woman is pregnant. Specific moments in life thus offer possibilities for mental change, but as I have shown, these often appear to be of a temporary nature; the witlessness is not described to last forever, nor does Heremod's outburst – even though its results are permanent. This transience, or the ability of minds to take on different characteristics at different moments, lies at the heart of descriptions of apparent mental illness as well. I have thus far largely avoided the term 'illness' when discussing early medieval minds but I will

[88] Katherine O' Brien O' Keefe, *Stealing Obedience: Narratives of Agency and Identity in Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), p. 73., Patricia M. Davis, 'Dreams and Visions in the Anglo-Saxon Conversion to Christianity' *Dreaming*, 15.2 (2005), 75–88 (p. 78)., Clare A. Lees and Gillian R. Overing, *Double Agents: Women and Clerical Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009). p. 24.

engage with it now, only in the context of early medieval medical books and hagiography and with the purpose of considering whether the illnesses listed are equally of a temporary nature or whether they were described to affect a person more permanently.

Apart from witlessness, other unwanted conditions of mind are listed in the *Old English Herbal* and in the Leechbooks. The *Old English Herbal* contains remedies against 'monoð seoce',[89] often translated as 'lunacy', such as the application of peony wort, which is said to permanently cure a person.[90] Another example is:

> Wið monoð seoce genim þysse wyrte reaw þe we polion nemdun gemenge wið eced smyra þær mid þa ðe þæt yfel þoligen toforan þam þe hyt hym to wylle y þeh þu hyre leaf y hyre wyttruman do on anne clæne clað Y gewriðe onbutan þæs mannes swyran þe þæt yfel ðolað hyt deþ onfundelnysse þæs sylfan þinges. [91]
>
> For a lunatic, take juice of this root which we call *polion*, mix it with vinegar, rub this on them that suffer that evil, before it will to him, and you should put the leaves of it and the roots of it on a clean cloth, and bind about the mans neck, who suffers evil, it will give proof of that same thing [its virtue].

Lunacy, or, at least, *monoð seoce*, is thus considered curable. However, lunacy is also occasionally detected by scholars in texts that do not specifically mention the term 'lunacy' or *monoð seoce*. Michael Lapidge translates 'mentis insania' in the *Life of St Ecgwine* as 'mental lunacy'. While this description indicates that symptoms originate from or affect the mind, the usage of the term 'lunacy' is perhaps more specific than 'insania', and not necessarily implied in this context.[92] When cases such as 'lunacy' are listed in medical books, and are thus considered to be an illness, scholars often classify these in a separate category from other, physical illnesses. Stanley Rubin lists a few of the remedies in Leechbook I for *ungemynde*[93] and *dysgunge*[94], which Cockayne translates as 'mental vacancy' and 'folly', and also as 'idiocy', and, while they are not categorised separately from other types of illness in

[89] 'monaþ-seoc' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Lunatic, epileptic.
[90] LXVI', *Leechdoms*, V.1 pp. 168-71.
[91] 'LVIII' *Leechdoms* V. 1, pp. 160-63.
[92] 'The Life of St Ecgwine', *Byrhtferth of Ramsey: The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*, ed. by Michael Lapidge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 290-91.
[93] 'ungemynd' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: confusion of mind, dementedness.
[94] 'dysgunge' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: silliness, foolishness.

the primary sources, Rubin categorises these as mental illnesses.[95] Similarly, in his work *Medieval Psychology*, in which early medieval English sources range from the leechbooks and law codes to hagiographical texts, Simon Kemp mentions 'the possessed, the lunatic, and the frenzied', found in *Bald's Leechbook*, as cases of the broader medieval medical mental condition *phrenitis*.[96] This condition or category, is examined by Kirsten C. Uszkalo by means of the Harley Glossary, dating from the late tenth- or early eleventh- century.[97] This glossary includes a list of terms combining *frenesis* with what seems to have been perceived as related terms, such as *furia*. These then yield definitions such as *gewitleasa* and *insania*, and terms denoting violence and rage. Notably, *hatheortnessa*[98] is mentioned, giving a suggestion that a bodily phenomenon takes place during these experiences. Uszkalo concludes that, '[r]epresenting possession as looking like madness and rage suggests a desire to articulate possession as a linguistic concept and as an embodied emotional state'.[99] She thus explains that these definitions articulate what 'rage possession' felt like.[100] The language used in certain medieval descriptions is therefore not exactly medical in nature, but rather has the purpose of conveying an experience to a reader.

Other afflictions or experiences of mind that are described to occur throughout the life of early medieval people tend to be retrospectively diagnosed by modern scholars as something present-day society is familiar with, or they are explained by centralising the circumstances supposedly causing the symptoms. An affliction that is also found in the medical literature and hagiography is demon possession. Peter Dendle describes demon possession to be the case when 'the subject's personality has, in the eyes of the community, been supplanted by a sentient agent intending harm'.[101] Dendle offers a range of explanations for the usage of this phenomenon: '[d]emon possession, introduced along with exorcism by Christian missionaries, may have provided the Anglo-Saxons with a behavioural and theoretical paradigm for the expression of certain biological, psychological, and even socio-political dysfunctions'.[102] Descriptions of possession are according to Dendle thus part of a

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[95] Stanley Rubin, *Medieval English Medicine* (New York: David & Charles and Barnes & Noble Books, 1974), p. 126. 'Leechbook I, lxvi', *Leechdoms*. pp. 142-43.
[96] Kemp, p. 119.
[97] Kirsten C. Uszkalo, 'Rage Possession: A Cognitive Science Approach to Early English Demon Possession', in *Bodies of Knowledge: Cultural Interpretations of Illness and Medicine in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Sally Crawford and Christina Lee (Oxford: Archeopress, 2010), pp. 5-17 (p. 9).
[98] 'hatheort-nes' literally *hot-heartedness*, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Wrath, anger, fury, rage, fervour, zeal.
[99] Uszkalo, p. 9.
[100] Ibid., pp. 9-10.
[101] Dendle, *Demon Possession*, p. 1.
[102] Ibid.

system that explains behaviour or symptoms caused by something *other* than demon possession. Yet possession is the description given by early medieval authors, and specific remedies are prescribed. Ruth Wehlau's introduction to *Darkness, Depression and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England* equally opens with the conclusive description of 'troubled mental states that vernacular authors often represent with images of shadows and darkness and that are now routinely called depression'.[103] Such comparisons and categorisations are frequently and swiftly made in scholarly literature on illness in the early medieval period. Leslie Lockett observes the same inclination of scholars to draw conclusions and categorisations about mental illness, but she argues that that terms like 'lunacy' were used to denote a different range of mental and physical symptoms in different texts.[104] She exemplifies using the *Thesaurus of Old English*, '[a]lthough lunacy, demonic possession, epilepsy, and undifferentiated madness may represent distinct illness categories for the present-day reader, the lumping of these disorders together in the Thesaurus parallels the conflation of these disorders in Anglo-Saxon literature and some of its late Latin antecedents'.[105] This approach to such terms allows concepts of minds and mental changeability to remain obscure, rather than determining what the exact modern parallel of those terms would be. There are also detailed studies of descriptions of what might today be considered mental illness, conducted outside of the medical sources and hagiography. Wallace examines, for example, the term 'unhælo',[106] used to describe Grendel in *Beowulf*, suggesting that this could refer to Grendel's mind. Wallace questions whether early medieval English people perhaps used the term '*unhælu* polysemously to refer to separate states [of spiritual degeneracy, physical or mental impairment], or did they believe the states themselves overlapped or were contiguous?'.[107] She argues that, if the majority of people favoured the hydraulic model of the mind; being central to the body, this would have affected their understanding of *unhælu*; being holistic and unifying and allowing creatures like Grendel to be associated 'with both evil *and* impairment/disease'.[108] Concepts and expectations of health thus depend on the

[103] Ruth Wehlau, ed. *Darkness, Depression and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2019), p. 1.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Lockett, 'The Limited Role of the Brain', p. 48.
[106] 'un-hælu' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: I. bad health, disease, sickness, infirmity. II. misfortune, mishap.
[107] Karen Bruce Wallace, 'Grendel and Goliath: Monstrous Superability and Disability in the Old English Corpus', in *Monstrosity, Disability, and the Posthuman in the Medieval and Early Modern World*, ed. by Richard H. Godden and Asa Simon Mittman (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp. 107-26 (p. 108).
[108] Wallace, p. 109.

described locations, and functioning of minds. Our understanding of such descriptions is therefore heavily dependent on the context we wish to incorporate in our studies.

Definitions and symptoms of mental medical conditions in the early medieval period might vary, but the way they were described also indicates that they were considered as individual, changeable or transient. The reason that lunacy, demon possession, and other illnesses described to affect the mind are listed in the leechbooks is, of course, to thereafter give remedies for these conditions, meaning that they are considered to be of a temporary nature. This impermanence – assuming that the remedies worked – leads to questions about the impact of such illnesses. The extent to which sufferers of severe episodes affecting their minds are subjected to stigma or consequences during or after this experience, and the ways in which it would affect their lives, is difficult to discern; Dendle describes early medieval England as 'a society just as concerned for preserving the well-being of the mentally ill as for punishing the effects of their violence'.[109] Simon Kemp also concludes that in early medieval English law, a criminal with a mental disorder was not considered liable for his actions, and their family would pay the required fine to the victim or victim's family. He gives the example that, '[t]his seems to be the explanation of why a madman named Hwaetred, who slew three men with an axe in the seventh century, could be later brought by his family to St. Guthlac for healing'.[110] The treatment of Hwaetred resonates with the same type of concern and care that Heremod's people are said to express for him, despite his behaviour caused by his changing mind. On the other hand, Stefan Jurasinski finds that, because of the problematic associations with demonic possession, the diagnosis or claim to being insane did not afford people any legal protection such as other vulnerable people might receive in early medieval England.[111] In a section on mental disease and devil-possession, Wilfrid Bonser poses that many illnesses of the mind were considered to have been caused by demons, and illustrates this by referring to early medieval descriptions of the lives of St Gregory and St Columba, where the saints suggests that demons can be swallowed with food or drink, and interfered to prevent or undo this.[112] He concludes from this 'that the treatment of the insane was considerate in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period' and that this was reflected in law.[113]

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[109] Dendle, *Demon Possession*, p. 6.
[110] Kemp, p. 126.
[111] Stefan Jurasinski, 'Madness and Responsibility in Anglo-Saxon England', *Peace and Protection in the Middle Ages.* ed. by T. B. Lambert and David Rollason (Durham: Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2009), pp. 99-121.
[112] Wilfrid Bonser, *The Medical Background of Anglo-Saxon England: A Study of History, Psychology, and Folklore* (London: The Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1963), p. 259.
[113] Ibid.

While penitentials did contain statements on the care for people who experienced problems of the mind, I have not been able to find any in the law codes. Bonser's only example pertains to the laws of Henry I, compiled a little later than the works studied in this project.[114] Despite these reports of considerate treatment, there are also references to violent remedies, such as one for a lunatic, which involves whipping a person with the skin of a porpoise.[115] What has become clear is that, while we cannot know the frequency with which these kinds of mental change and problems occurred and how harshly sufferers were judged, yet they were common enough for people to provide recommendations on how to prevent these changes from occurring and how to reverse them with treatment.

3.3 Mature Minds and Old Age

The excerpts I discussed in section 3.2 support the idea that adult women's minds are frequently described as changing under particular circumstances. Similarly, indications in the medical books show that minds respond to specific influences by expressing an expectation that medical recipes can help alter a mental state. This confirms that it is possible for minds to change after childhood, and I will now explore some more examples where mature minds show the ability to change. I will give some examples that indicates that minds can mature beyond youth, by returning to *Beowulf*, where this theme is particularly prominent. A certain contrast can be found between king Hrothgar and Beowulf, not only in physical — but also in mental strength. Hrothgar is frequently referred to as 'frod'[116], 'snotor'[117] and 'wisa'[118] (ll.190, 1306, 1313, 1318, 1334, 1400, 1475).[119] These terms are often combined with terms for age and years, as well as terms for mind. Zwikstra notes that the relationship between old age and wisdom is so strong in early medieval literature, that the term *frod* means both old *and* wise, and that '*frod* results from the aging mind properly seasoned'.[120] He also argues that there is a relationship between old age and winter in the Ages of Man schema, and notes that '[while] the physical affliction of winter is negative, even detrimental, as is the physical affliction of old age, […] surviving winter is positive, as can be the mental reward for surviving into old age'.[121] Zwikstra thus emphasises that there is a direct connection between

[114] Ibid.
[115] 'Leechbook III, xl' *Leechdoms*, III, pp. 334-35.
[116] 'frod' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: I. Wise, prudent, sage, skilful. II. Advanced in years, aged, old, ancient.
[117] 'snotor' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Prudent, wise, sagacious.
[118] 'wise' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Wisely, with wisdom.
[119] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, pp., 9, 46, 49, 51.
[120] Zwikstra, pp. 133-34.
[121] Zwikstra, p. 146.

ageing and positive changes in the mind, despite indications that the body changes in a negative way. He also contends that *frod* wisdom should be considered to be brought about by (the processing of) experience.[122] I will concentrate on the themes of development of the mind, old age and experience in this section of the chapter.

The terms denoting wisdom are not applied to Beowulf when he is still a young man, until after his success at Heorot, and he is described to become increasingly wise with age:

> syððan Beowulfe br(a)de rice
> on hand gehwearf; he geheold tela
> fiftig wintr(a) wæs ða frod cyning
> eald eþel(w)eard.[123]
>
> Then Beowulf inherited
> a broad kingdom; he ruled well
> for fifty winters — then he was a wise king,
> an old guardian of the homeland

The description of wisdom is placed between two descriptions of Beowulf's age, emphasising the connection between wisdom and his stage in life. However, an exception to this connection can be found in the descriptions of a female ruler in *Beowulf*. Hygd, whose name relates to the term 'hyge' – a common word for mind– is described as young and wise,

> Hygd swiðe geong,
> wis welþungen, þeah ðe wintra lyt
> under burhlocan gebiden hæbbe,
> Hæreþes dohtor; næs hio hnah swa þeah,
> ne to gneað gifa Geata leodum,
> maþmgestreona.[124]
>
> Hygd was very young
> wise, accomplished, through few winters
> She had lived in the walled stronghold,
> Haereth's daughter was not mean

[122] Zwikstra, p. 149.
[123] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, pp. 74-75, ll. 2207-10.
[124] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 65, ll. 1926-31.

nor too sparing of gifts of treasure to the people of the Geats.

This passage seems to demonstrate an exception, just as a developed mind in youth was considered a mark of exceptionality in hagiography, which I discussed earlier in this chapter. While young people are generally not described as wise, the emphasis on Hygd's age contrasts Beowulf's age; again, the description of wisdom is interposed between the references to age. Furthermore, the description of what Hygd is not, emphasises the possibility or even the expectation, that she would be mean and sparing of gift giving – much like we saw in the descriptions of Heremod.

This passage on Hygd is immediately followed by an introduction of another queen: 'Mod þryðo wæg, fremu folces cwen, firen ondrysne', Modthryth, famous queen of the people, committed terrible crimes.[125] Modthryth, literally translated as 'strength of mind', was a queen who is described as cruel and criminal, and who thereby offers an opposing example of queenship to Hygd's. It has been suggested that the Old English passage does not describe the queen's name at all, but rather her behaviour. Tom Shippey argues that 'Mod þryðo wæg' refers to '*Genesis* 2238b, *hygeþryðe wæg*, "showed violence of character"'.[126] The name or character description of Modthryth recalls the advice of steering and controlling minds, discussed in the maxims and in *The Seafarer,* and the lack of which potentially affected Heremod's mind. Modthryth is perhaps given as another example of the problems of a strong but ungoverned mind. It is difficult to compare descriptions of Heremod and Modthryth, as we are not given much information about the behaviour of the latter. Heremod's mind developed or expanded in a negative way, but the description of Modthryth indicates that her problematic behaviour is resolved when she marries king Offa and has children. The belief that pregnancy and motherhood can have an effect on a woman's mind is possibly also present here. It has also been suggested that Hygd was the same person as Modthryth before she married Hygelac as Offa's young widow, and that previous other interpretations were caused by misreadings of her name and her drastic change in behaviour.[127] Whether or not we accept this reading, we can see that both change in circumstances, as well as the process of ageing, are potential factors in developing drastic changes in mind and maturity of king- and queenship.

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[125] Ibid., ll. 1931-32.
[126] Tom Shippey, 'Wicked Queens and Cousin Strategies in Beowulf and Elsewhere' *The Heroic Age*, 5 (2001), p. 1.
[127] N. E. Eliason, 'The Thryth-Offa Digression in *Beowulf*', in *Franciplegius: Medieval and Linguistic Studies in Honor of Francis Peabody Magoun*, ed. by Jess B. Bessinger, Robert Payson Creed (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1965) pp. 124-38.

Returning to the descriptions of Beowulf's mind as an elderly king, there is an indication that in addition to factors of internal development such as age, circumstantial factors also play a role on how his mind behaves. The influence of the dragon on Beowulf's kingdom, for instance, is connected to such internal mental change,

> þæt ðam godan wæs
> hreow on hreðre, hygesorga mæst;
> wende se wisa þæt he wealdende
> ofer ealde riht, ecean dryhtne
> bitre gebulge; breost innan weoll
> þeostrum geþoncum, swa him geþywe ne wæs.[128]
>
> that was to the good man
> a grief in his heart, the greatest of the mind-sorrows,
> the wise man thought that he the Ruler,
> The eternal Lord had bitterly angered
> against ancient law; the inside of his breast flowed
> with thoughts of gloom, this was not usual for him.

The flowing or welling within Beowulf's breast, and the emotions paired with this, are considered unusual. The extraordinary circumstances that Beowulf experiences at this moment cause extraordinary sensations. Beowulf is still emphatically described as wise and good, suggesting that the emotions described may usually be considered to belong to a more malevolent person. The verb *wendan* signifies a strong, physical, change, or turning of some kind in the way Beowulf thinks about the Lord. Furthermore, *weallan,* while presumably chosen to alliterate with *wealdende*, suggests liquid welling up in Beowulf's breast, reminding of the hydraulic model of the mind, and of Heremod's expanding mind. When Beowulf faces the dragon, he 'geweold his gewitte;' he gathered his wits.[129] *Geweold* indicates that Beowulf governs, or wields his wits or mind; comparable to language used for the handling of weapons. While Modthryth had a strong but ungoverned mind, Beowulf shows skill in applying his. It therefore again appears that age is not the only factor in development of minds, but that circumstances and experience can equally bring about a type of physical change in Beowulf's mind. Not only do these descriptions indicate that something

[128] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 80, ll. 2327-32.
[129] Ibid., p. 92, ll. 2703.

is altered inside his mind, but his mind itself moves; it turns and Beowulf is able to govern or steer it. Significant alterations take place in Beowulf's mind in his old age, triggered by circumstance and governed by Beowulf himself. Perhaps it is a mark of Beowulf's maturity that he is able to govern his mind, but what becomes clear throughout *Beowulf* is that control over the mind and mental maturity are also the result of training and discipline, and Hygd and Modthryth developed their minds despite age and because of life-altering circumstances. Even by reaching a mature age and with training, there is no guarantee that a mind will have developed in the desired way, as Heremod's narrative demonstrates.

Conclusion

The findings in this chapter demonstrate that there are expectations presented in early medieval literature from England for certain mental developments during the life span, and that there was a belief that influence could be had on this development. There appear to be different expectations for the functioning of minds in different stages of life. There was emphasis on training or governing of the mind, mentioned in the *Maxims*, particularly aimed at the mind in a person's youth. *Beowulf*'s Heremod appears as an example where, perhaps despite training provided by his environment, the mind developed in an undesired manner. Growth and expansion are described to occur in Heremod's mind, but the effect on his environment is only destructive. Adults' minds also have the potential to change in early medieval English literature, as the possibility for witlessness or prognostic dreams to occur during an adult woman's pregnancy, and illnesses affecting the mind, such as lunacy, all signify mental change based on physical circumstances. In the cases where pregnancy is described, there is a strong emphasis on the relationship between the mother and foetus, and there is a possibility presented that one has the ability to affect the other's mind. Further, descriptions of wisdom in Hrothgar's mind and mental adaptability in Beowulf's mind when he is of old age, demonstrate that these characteristics were considered to develop at a later stage in life. These are all examples that testify to the anticipation for mental change at certain life stages and events. However, *Beowulf* is full of examples that show there were exceptions that went against the expectations of a person's environment. Apart from Heremod, there are indications that Hygd and Modthryth both developed their minds before reaching old age; Modthryth's transformation was probably caused by the influence of her circumstances. *Beowulf* thus shows that there is a line of expectation regarding age, or stage in life, and mental development. This text pays particular attention to and concern for the cases where this development does not follow the expected path, which can have positive and

negative effects. The anticipated course of development of minds as described in *Beowulf*, and the circumstances that can influence them are thus present in a variety of literary genres.

There is an emphasis in various texts from early medieval England on a concern for unpredictable behaviour of minds in different circumstances. The texts studied in this chapter included wisdom and elegiac poetry, law codes, hagiography and medical texts, all of which agree that there is a diversity of minds, and within those minds lies the potential for more change. The primary source materials confirm that individuality and instability were seen as prominent features of minds. The development and behaviour of minds was described as contingent on training, health, physical circumstances and age. These factors are described as having the potential to influence minds and thus it seems that people could anticipate changes in minds or considered themselves to have a certain amount of control over these changes, by, for example, using diets or medical recipes. In light of these findings in this chapter it thus becomes clear that the concept or notions of minds described in the primary literature are diverse and plural. They are difficult to describe in any kind of model because, while there may be patterns and expectations of how minds could behave and develop during life in early medieval literature from England, they are in essence characterised by changeability. Present-day scholarly models of the early medieval mind focus on philosophical traditions, features such as corporeality and the locus of the mind, as well as some characteristics ascribed to minds, but they do not allow for a range of descriptions that is contingent on other elements. Any present-day model of the early medieval mind is likely to represent one type of mind in one particular circumstance, or one type of mind with the potential to develop or to display certain features. As evidence from the primary sources presents minds as inherently unstable and changeable, these features thus resists categorisation and should be considered outside of the scope of a particular model.

Chapter 4. Extended, Travelling and Non-human Minds

While the first three chapters of this thesis have exposed, expanded and re-shaped ideas on the mind in the early medieval English human lifetime, the following two chapters push the study of early medieval conceptions of the mind in new directions, taking in sources that have not previously been considered in scholarship on the mind. One under-acknowledged feature of early medieval literary sources in particular is that it is rich with descriptions of minds that appear to be non-human. Early medieval literature from England describes minds that are located in humans, but substantial attention is also devoted to appearances of minds and mentalities outside of the human body. Textual and material examples inform us of concepts of mind which do not necessarily inhabit human bodies, or that are not even human in origin at all. For example, many early medieval riddles feature objects that tell their own stories, the whalebone Franks Casket tells us how the whale felt when it was stranded, and religious texts such as the *Dream of the Rood* encourage us to imagine objects and animals containing a type of consciousness that belongs to themselves or to an external source. Many of the texts and objects selected for this chapter have previously been studied and discussed by scholars, but no explicit connection or comparison has been made between the fields of human and non-human minds. Considering the interest of early medieval English people in different types of minds may augment modern notions of early medieval human minds, and challenge ideas of human exceptionalism. Ultimately, this chapter explores the reasons why early medieval English people paid such attention to the construction of, what I define as, extended, travelling and non-human minds. The aim of this is to gain a better understanding of early medieval notions of mind and consciousness by studying all the sources in which consciousness is represented, whether that is afforded to humans or non-humans, living or dead. I argue in this chapter that the conception of minds as being outside of the body suggests that the concept of the mind as inside the human body was recognised as having limitations, and that, by thinking beyond the human, people attempted to overcome these limitations.

The ways in which scholarship has thus far discussed descriptions of non-human minds is by considering the texts and objects where these are contained, in a sphere of study that is largely segregated from discussions on the human mind. Scholars such as Leslie Lockett and Antonina Harbus, who have written substantial work on the mind in early medieval literature and informed a significant part of my research on human minds, do not

refer to mental activity in objects or animals at all.[1] There are scholars who have investigated descriptions of what I consider apparent mental activity in non-human entities in the field of early medieval material culture and art, or considered particular stylistic features and traditional techniques in poetry. Their research often touches upon this appearance of mental activity, but neglects to identify it as anything related to (human) minds, and rather seeks a different explanation for its presence. One such study is Britt Mize's *Traditional Subjectivities*, which directs attention to the representation of animal minds in a variety of media. Mize does not focus on the concept of the mind in early medieval England, but instead looks at what he describes as 'the powerful attraction to loci of subjectivity […] in Old English poetry'.[2] This subjectivity is described by him as 'an imagined locus of [experience- or perception-bound] consciousness'.[3] The subject or consciousness occupies that locus, the identity of which is not relevant in this matter.[4] In other words, according to Mize, descriptions of mental experience are often imagined to take place in a particular person, animal or object by an external protagonist, meaning that these are not necessarily thought of as having minds of their own but they serve a particular purpose in storytelling. I agree with Mize that such a display of non-human mental experience is constructed by humans for a reason, but the amount of examples where this is the case, and the variety of such descriptions leads me to believe that there is more than one reason for constructing these minds, and that some reasons have not yet been considered by scholarship.

Mize considers the descriptions of consciousness in humans, animals or objects to be a technique of storytelling.[5] Within techniques of storytelling, he recognises several traditional methods of conveying mentalities in animals and objects. Mize argues that it is often convention that the internal, mental states and thoughts of animals and objects are described. According to him, 'recognition of the poetics of mentality suggests, first, that we cannot build interpretation of individual texts upon the fact that the poet provides information about one or another experiential position'.[6] This suggests that we should not consider the selected experiential position to be overly significant in the interpretation of the text. In one example, Mize discusses the Franks Casket, or Auzon Casket; an eighth-century whalebone casket that describes the experience and suffering of the whale it is made out of, and he

[1] Harbus, *The Life of the Mind.,* and Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies.*
[2] Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities*, p. 23.
[3] Ibid., p. 24.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid., p. 237.

claims that the 'emotional state of a stranded whale mattered to the poet because he or she was writing a classical Old English poem'.[7] Depictions of non-human mental states are often considered customary rather than contextually meaningful by scholars such as Mize. It seems to me that such typical examples of poetic technique need indeed be recognised as showing a pattern. Yet, by grouping them together as one poetic device with one particular purpose, this approach lacks consideration of the possibility that there are specific reasons for the decision to use this device in individual cases. Even if we find no evidence beyond convention, we should try to come to a better understanding of why this peculiar custom to ascribe mental states to animals and objects is convention at all, and what it tells us about early medieval human minds that they chose to seek and create such mental awareness outside of themselves.

Many of the scholarly discussions that relate to non-human minds in medieval sources are carried within analysis of 'voice', centring the verbalisation, rather than the origin of a particular message.[8] This term 'voice' is frequently applied to the expression of a kind of self-awareness in objects and animals. 'Voice' is described by James Paz as something given to, and received by humans, but expressed by an object which appears to have the ability to drastically change that 'voice'.[9] He considers the objects or 'things' that he examined for his study to be active or animate in the way that they connect with other things or people:

> The active role that things have in the early medieval world can also be linked to the Germanic origins of the word, where a þing is a kind of assembly, with the ability to gather other elements – material goods, bodies, words, ideas – to it. It is in this way that a thing might be said to speak. By moulding meaning and matter together into a distinct whole, a cross, a casket, a book, a relic, becomes talkative. Such talking things can exist across boundaries of time and space in ways that embodied humans cannot, carrying our voices from the past into the present and future.[10]

What is called 'voice' by scholars like Paz, does not concern sound, but refers to a different kind of meaning, or a way of transmitting a human voice. 'Voice' is sometimes also

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[7] Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities*, p. 237., *The Franks Casket*, early eighth century, Casket, London, The British Museum. Museum number 1867,0120.1 <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1867-0120-1> [accessed 11 December 2020].
[8] In this chapter, I refer to 'voice' as a scholarly construct regarding a textual or visual message, and voice (without inverted commas) to refer to a literal voice as described in the primary literature.
[9] Paz, p. 2.
[10] Paz, p. 3.

considered to be a symbol or textual inscription created by humans, that presents the possibility of being read or interpreted by a person. Catherine E. Karkov's work on objects' 'voices' is primarily focused on such inscriptions on objects.[11] She identifies various distinct types of inscription on, for example, the Ruthwell Cross, as different 'voices', based on their language and script, and even on images that are used. By using these various 'voices', not all of which are understandable to all people, different people can be reached.[12] 'Voice' is thus something used in order to make a particular impression on the object's audience, but it also influences the way we think about the origins of that 'voice'. Karkov explores various ways in which an object may speak, and various reasons for this, building a foundation for the investigation of possible reasons why early medieval people purposefully created the representation of an inner mental world of an object, or even straightforwardly implied that this mental world existed. Despite describing objects to have a 'voice', scholars such as Karkov do not seem to think that these were imagined as containing an inner mental world, whether this is supposed to originate in themselves or elsewhere, in the eyes of an early medieval audience. The Ruthwell Cross is inscribed with a poem very similar to *The Dream of the Rood,* in which the cross famously refers to people as *reordberend,* gifted with, or carrying 'voice'. Yet it paradoxically tells its own story, challenging ideas of free will and agency. Signalling 'voice' is an important indicator in this chapter of where mental activity is imagined to take place, and this may eventually inform us of why this activity or this mind is communicating its presence outside the human body. I argue in this chapter that 'voices' in texts and material culture appear as sensory manifestations that signal that there is a mental world present inside objects or animals. Instead of considering this phenomenon as only consisting of a 'voice', I will look at the implications the 'voice' expresses about the creator of its message, or rather the thinking-force that is driving it and to which it refers.

One primary reason I give for the numerousness and variety of descriptions of minds that appear outside of the human body is that there was a need to construct external places for minds and mental processes because of explicit mental instability in humans. The Old English word *staþol*[13] is frequently applied to minds in early medieval literature. This word has a strong semantic relation with 'stability', as well as an association with something being grounded in a particular position or foundation. There are compound nouns that include both

[11] Karkov, p. 135.
[12] Karkov, p. 138.
[13] 'staþol' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online:* I. a foundation (lit. or fig.), […], II. fixed condition, state, position, […], III. a fixed position, station, place, site, IV. the firmament, the heavens.

staþol and terms for mind: *modstaþol, modstaþolness, modstaþolfæstness* all appear in the corpus of Old English literature.[14] Following *staþol* as a central concept within descriptions of the functioning of minds shows the frequency of the search for stability, and the implication that instability of mind is a normative feature that is present in different types of literature. The description of Adam in the Old English prose *Solomon and Saturn*, which I discussed in Chapter 2, suggests that his mind was intrinsically unstable, and likewise, *hyge staþeliað* is mentioned in *Guthlac A*, and *ferð staþelian* in *Juliana*, both indicating that minds are not always stable but that stability of mind can be achieved.[15] Is the emphasis on this intrinsic instability of human minds another positive acknowledgement of the qualities of mind I analysed in previous chapters – that minds are innately varied, diverse, flexible, unknowable, and changeable – or does it sometimes lead to a search for external stability? Early medieval literature from England contains instructions on how to find *staþol* in a person's own mind or in a particular external foundation. The latter is what I explore in this chapter through the device of 'voice'. If 'voices' can lead us to the places that were considered relevant to leave a message of apparent mental awareness, this can, in turn, show us if such a constructed mind was considered more or less stable than a human mind. Even if descriptions of mental activity or existence outside of humans tell us nothing else, they still tell us that early medieval people found it somehow helpful or stimulating to consider minds outside of their own human mental experiences. This indicates again the possibility that people considered their minds to be somehow limited, and searched for possibilities to expand, create, and be in contact with consciousness outside themselves.

This chapter is structured around the types of mind that are not part of the human body, which I have identified in Old English literature and material culture. The first type of mind I distinguish is the 'extended mind', the definition of which I base on Merlin Donald's theory on engrams and exograms, which argues that some cognitive processes can be extended beyond the human mind and be placed inside an object.[16] An extended process, or exogram, can function as an external memory record, can be retrieved and offers perceptual access, and it has the potential to be permanent. In contrast, an engram, or internal memory record, offers limited perceptual access, is 'limited to the capacity of the human central

[14] Eric Stanley, 'Staþol: A Firm Foundation for Imagery', in *Text, Image, Interpretation: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature and its Insular Context in Honour of Éamonn Ó Carragáin* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2007), pp. 319-32 (p. 321).
[15] 'Guthlac A' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 44-88, l. 66., Juliana, *The Exeter Book*, pp. 113-33, l. 271.
[16] Donald, pp. 315.

nervous system', and it lasts only as long as the individual that contains it lives.[17] I will discuss the phenomenon of exograms in section 4.1 through the example of the Exeter Book *Riddle 47* to which I will refer as the 'bookworm' riddle. This riddle and its potential interpretations will lead the way into a field of study of non-human minds and 'voices'. The second type of mind I distinguish is the travelling human mind, and in section 4.2 of this chapter I look at the travelling mind described in the Old English poem *The Seafarer*. As suggested by certain texts and models discussed in Chapter 2, minds are described as able to travel through the body, but certain early medieval English texts also present us with human minds that travel outside the body. Travelling minds, such as described in *The Seafarer,* appear to have a very different purpose or experience from the minds that extend themselves into an object. I question what it is that makes a mind leave its original foundation to travel outside the body, and I will look at the impact of 'voice' that seems to be a perceivable part of some of these phenomena.

The part of the chapter that follows is based on non-human minds. This part is split into a section on objects and a section on animals. In section 4.3 of this chapter, I consider descriptions of objects' minds in early medieval texts. While the objects I discuss in section 4.1 of this chapter appear to function as a foundation for an extended human mind, I will here include objects that have a different, seemingly non-human, voice. Examples such as an early medieval inscribed ring, contain descriptions of themselves or indicate a certain mental activity taking place in itself. I argue here that what is called 'voice' by scholars is a slightly different concept than the literal voice early medieval people described in some literature, such as in *Beowulf* and the Exeter Book riddles. I explore where objects' voices are imagined as originating, and investigate whether the voice of the object, the voice of its creator, or the voice of something else is heard. Part 4.4 of this chapter concerns some of the many references to living animal minds, found primarily in some Old English poetry. I will examine descriptions of non-human minds such as the mental process of the whale in the poem *The Whale*, the dragon in *Beowulf,* and the animals transformed by Circe in the *Old English Boethius*, and compare the use of language and image to the descriptions of human minds in previous chapters. Finally, I look at minds that do not fit into one, but in several of these categories in section 4.5, by example of the Franks casket. The Franks Casket is made out of whalebone and tells us about this whale as well as about various other stories. It can be

[17] Donald, p. 315.

interpreted as an object as well as an animal, and therefore shows the connection between these categories and their non-exclusivity.

4.1 The Extended Human mind

> Moðde word fræt. Me þæt þuhte
> wrætlicu wyrd, þa ic þæt wundor gefrægn,
> þæt se wyrm forswealg wera gied sumes,
> þeof in þystro, þrymfæstne cwide
> ond þæs strangan staþol. Stælgiest ne wæs
> wihte þy gleawra, þe he þam wordum swealg.[18]
>
> A moth ate words. To me it seemed
> a remarkable fate when I discovered the miracle
> that the worm had swallowed the speech of a man.
> A thief in the night, a mighty saying
> and its strong foundation. The stealing guest was not
> any the wiser – even though he swallowed the words.

This is *Riddle 47* of the Exeter Book, for which the solution 'bookworm' is usually offered, and it tells us of the worm that is eating someone's written speech out of a book. *Moðde, wyrm, þeof* and *stælgiest* are terms used for the bookworm, who eats *gied sumes, þrymfæstne cwide* and *wordum*: a voice in written form, together with its *staþol,* referring to the page. The riddle has a focus on oral culture, which has established itself on the page: the references to 'speech of a man' and 'a renowned saying', imply that the 'voice' that the bookworm devours is not the voice of the book itself, but that it is merely contained there and that it was previously owned by a person. This person has thus succeeded in leaving their thoughts or their voice, in the form of written words, in a tangible object. By referring to speech, the riddle also indicates a potential function of the writing beyond its current usage, and for which a person's voice will be needed again, and yet the voice exists without a person, silent and material. The page of the book is described as being a *staþol:* a stable foundation to place someone's thoughts and voice.

The 'bookworm' riddle offers a solution to this search for stability or *staþol,* and provides a foundation to leave what is essentially a mental process. Although this may solve one problem, the riddle also shows anxiety over the medium of the book – is it stable enough

[18] 'Riddle 47', *The Exeter Book,* p. 205, ll. 1-6.

to be used as foundation for our thoughts and speech? The riddle shows the changeability and loss of control over the words on the page, mirroring the qualities that are warned for in some descriptions of minds, as I have shown in the previous chapter.[19] The use of *staþol* in the 'bookworm' riddle and the search for a foundation invite a comparison to the study of Extended Mind Theory, which considers the possibility of cognitive states and processes to extend beyond the brain and into the world, and specifically, into objects. This object then becomes part of a cognitive process.[20] An 'exogram', as stated before, can be described as an external cognitive process which is fundamentally different from and lasts longer than the brain's memory, or 'engrams', according to Donald.[21] It has particular advantages in its potential to survive for a long time, and its accessibility by others. John Sutton describes this as 'the realm of the mental [spreading] across the physical, social and cultural environments, as well as bodies and brains'.[22] The mental can thus extend itself, and apparently leave some kind of mark of its existence. Although we cannot simply compare this modern theory to what is described in the 'bookworm' riddle, not in the least because of the discrepancy in concepts of mind and brain, the description of creating or imagining an external, physical mental world points to a perceived limitation in people's own minds, and the possibility for extension or substitution. Looking at the riddle from this perspective, we can see how early medieval people may have considered the written medium to accommodate a type of extension, or exogram, of their minds. The riddle tells us that a person has left their 'voice' on the page, and although the message is not exposed to us in the riddle, we know it is put there so that it can be accessed again. Unfortunately, the reliability of the exogram has to be questioned; by placing it in a book it may seem stabilised but it is easily destroyed. This curious poetic conceptualisation of a voice in a book thinks through what is, simply put, a prospective method of extending a mind, and preserving it, but also exposes its limits.

The description of the voice in the 'bookworm' riddle, which indicates that the voice comes from a man and is enclosed in the book, seems to me to describe a different origin of its message from the 'voice' that scholars such as Karkov describe. Karkov's descriptions of the Ruthwell Cross seem to indicate that the 'voice' belongs to nobody but the cross, as it contains the cross' experiences, but this is brought to life by the people who read it. Karkov's focus on 'voice' is a focus on the person interpreting or receiving the message, but in the

[19] See analysis Heremod, Chapter 3.1 'Developing Minds in Childhood and Youth'.
[20] Andy Clark and David Chalmers, 'The Extended Mind' *Analysis* 58.1 (1998), pp. 7–19., Sutton, pp. 189-90.
[21] Donald, p. 315.
[22] Sutton, pp. 189-226.

'bookworm' riddle, the voice has a clear origin and exists without a receiver. The voice referred to in this riddle does not belong to the book, it is not changed by its material surroundings, but it is just there, even without anyone to read it. The only alteration it can suffer is by the destructive bookworm. The voice thus does have a relationship with the object that holds it, even if that is not where it originates, and it depends on that object for survival. I therefore think Karkov's and Paz's descriptions of 'voice' only cover part of the 'voice's' journey. Texts such as the 'bookworm' riddle indicate that a voice can exist separately from its creator and before it is spoken, heard or otherwise revived by a receiver. The 'bookworm' riddle seems to fit neither of these scholarly descriptions of voice perfectly, and yet it contains a very prominent 'voice' that I will compare to others in early medieval literature in order to find out if these indicate the constructed presence of a mind or cognitive process.

4.2 The Travelling Mind

I have shown that the 'bookworm' riddle contains indications that human minds were not thought of as stable entities, and that they can somehow extend aspects of themselves out of their original location. I have also discussed various takes on non-human minds or mental activity under the guise of 'voice', and argued that these often signal that they belong to, or have originated from human minds. There is textual support in early medieval literature from England for a direct connection between minds and 'voice' that forms the focus of this section of the chapter. I will begin by looking at what I identify as the Travelling Mind. In Chapter 2, I discussed descriptions that indicate physicality of minds, and the possibility that minds travel through and even outside the human body.[23] I will now return to some of these examples and question whether this appearance of a mind outside the body is somehow related to the voices I have just identified, and whether this points to a perceived instability of human minds.

The Old English poem *The Seafarer* describes how a mind leaves its bodily container and roams over the sea, before returning to the body. I have discussed *The Seafarer* in Chapter 2 in my analysis on corporeality and I questioned whether this passage describes a literal or metaphorical journey of the mind and presumed a literal reading to gain new perspectives on concepts of mind. I also demonstrated that instability of mind is described as a normative feature in some early medieval texts, such as in the description of the creation of

[23] See Chapter 2.2 'The Mind as Incorporeal and Corporeal Entity'.

Adam in the prose *Solomon and Saturn*.[24] With these findings in mind, I will now consider the poem *The Seafarer* in the context of mental stability and groundedness, and argue that the travelling of the mind is a direct result of the lack of stability. In the description of the seafarer's mind, the term *staþol* is used twice:

> Meotod him þæt mod gestaþelað, forþon he in his
> meahte gelyfeð.
> Stieran mon sceal strongum mode, ond þæt on staþelum
> healdan,
> ond gewis werum, wisum clæne.[25]
>
> God establishes the *mod* within him, because he trusts
> in His power.
> A man must steer [with] his wilful *mod* and keep it grounded,
> and certain with men, pure in direction.

In contrast with Adam's unstable mind in the prose *Solomon and Saturn*, God stabilises a *mod* here, presumably in the seafarer. Yet, it is explicitly described as 'strongum', and it is still in need of steering or controlling. Effort and control are required to keep this mind 'on staþelum' – grounded, but this does not appear to happen, because immediately following this passage, the poem describes how the mind travels outside of the body, and therefore does not remain physically grounded:

> Forþon nu min hyge hweorfeð ofer hreþerlocan,
> min modsefa mid mereflode
> ofer hwæles eþel hweorfeð wide,
> eorþan sceates, cymeð eft to me
> gifre ond grædig, gielleð anfloga,
> hweteð on hwælweg hreþer unwearnum
> ofer holma gelagu.[26]
>
> And now my *hyge* turns out of its *hreþerlocan*,
> my *modsefa* travels with the sea

[24] Ibid.
[25] 'The Seafarer' *The Exeter Book*, p. 146, ll. 108-12.
[26] Ibid., p. 145, ll. 58-64.

over the whale's realm moving wildly,
the corners of the earth, then comes to me again
eager and greedy, flying solitary and yelling,
urging the unhindered *hreþer* over the whale-road,
over the ocean's waves.[27]

The *hyge* escapes from the *hreþerlocan*, which appears to be its container. Afterwards, assuming *modsefa* is used as synonym; it travels over the sea. This location has been prominent in the poem and draws attention to the potential materiality of the setting of this flight of the mind – it does not disappear, nor does it travel to an imaginary location. As discussed in Chapter 2, the physical description in these lines causes some disagreement in scholarship over whether we should consider the flight of the mind here to be a literal or metaphorical occurrence.[28] The purposeful friction between the material and the imaginary, and the mind travelling between body and external world, suggests that perhaps both literal and metaphorical reading are encouraged. The ambiguity of this depiction mirrors the descriptions of changeability of minds, and of the potential to re-place or externalise minds somehow. Furthermore, the stark contrast caused by the change in situation of this mind, which was previously enclosed and hindered, and is now roaming the world and even yelling, suggests that a change in foundation, or a change in control unleashes a mind's abilities. What may have initially been a unified mind, now appears to be shattered: the *hyge* splits form its *hreþerlocan*, and is changed (perhaps only linguistically) into the *modsefa,* which in turn appears to chase the *hreþer.* The yelling indicates that the *modsefa* suddenly has a voice; it manifests itself in the external world, and its sound can be perceived. Although the debate on literal versus metaphorical readings will not be easily resolved, I conclude for now that this journey of the mind projects a mind capable of mobilising itself and becoming fragmented in the process.

The Seafarer allows us to consider that when a mind travels in early medieval thought, it can display different or even new characteristics than it had while it was enclosed, and it is not the only text that suggests this. I want to draw attention to certain parallels in

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[27] 'hyge' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: Mind, heart, soul.
'hreþerloca' literally *breast-locker. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the breast.
'modsefa' literally *mind-mind* or *mind-heart. An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: The inner man, mind, spirit, soul, heart.
'hreþer' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: breast, bosom.
[28] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 425., Harbus, *Cognitive Approaches*, p. 31., Please see my discussion in Chapter 2.2 'The Mind as Incorporeal and Corporeal Entity'.

texts that indicate a specific way of thinking about minds and their capabilities, and particularly that express a connection between mind and voice. For instance, before Beowulf faces the dragon, he experiences swelling of his chest, frequently indicated as the location of the mind in *Beowulf*, and a different type of escape from his body takes place:

> Let ða of breostum ða he gebolgen wæs
> Weder-Geata leod word ut faran
> stearcheort styrmde stefn in becom
> heaðotorht hlynnan under harne stan.[29]
>
> Then he let from his breast, when he was angered,
> the Weder-Geat's leader, a word burst out,
> the staunch-hearted one roared; his voice came in,
> sounding battle-clear beneath the hoary grey stone;

It is not Beowulf's mind, but a word that bursts out. The order in which this happens is peculiar, as the word bursts out before we are told that Beowulf roared, and only after this his voice is heard. It suggests that perhaps the word, the roar and the voice are different things, or that, as this sequence takes a different order than we may expect, it is telling us something about the nature of this type of voice. Part of this production of noise seems involuntary, only the roaring being explicitly acted out by Beowulf, and the boundary between what is internal and external seems thin. This description recalls the passage in *Adrian and Ritheus*, quoted in Chapter 2, where the mind is in the head and goes out through the mouth.[30] Beowulf is *gebolgen*, an indication of growth and swelling, just like Heremod was when he burst with aggression. In both cases, there is an indication that there is pressure on and constriction of something in the chest, described to contain the mind, which leads to an ejection of its contents and the production of sound– just as we see happen in *The Seafarer*. Notably, the explosive escape of emotion, which then takes the shape of voice, strongly resembles the description of the seafarer's mind, which is said to be yelling after finding freedom outside of its container. There is thus a connection between minds under pressure and a voice that expresses something at the same time. Unlike Heremod's destructive experience, Beowulf's expulsion is verbal, but still it causes physical impact: it makes sound under the grey stone and alerts the dragon to his presence. In neither of these cases do we know what the voices

[29] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 87, ll. 2550-53.
[30] See Chapter 2.3 'The Location of the Mind'.

express but the presence of voice in itself is noteworthy. These descriptions where the enclosed physical container is abandoned for free movement and vocal impact, support literal readings of travelling minds. They also support much more literal readings of what 'voice' may be in relation to minds: the voices in the 'bookworm' riddle, *The Seafarer* and *Beowulf* have described sound rather than image, text, or symbol. The appearance of the term *staþol* in various texts informs us not only about the wish to keep minds in place and under control, but also that the opposite of this was considered possible. Ideas relating to foundations, stability and control play a fundamental role in the abilities of minds to transpose themselves: indicating place, fixed position, and if circumstance requires it, the ability to leave this.

4.3 Non-human Minds: Objects

In this part of the chapter, I consider the possibility that early medieval people did not only regard their own minds as capable of expanding and travelling, but also that they sometimes considered objects to have similar properties or attributes to themselves. This brief section on the theory of material agency will provide a framework for the objects I will analyse shortly, as well as for the subject of relics, which I discuss in Chapter 5. The subject of material agency has received a lot of scholarly interest. Generally, what is meant by the concept of non-human 'agency' is a way in which objects or an environment can affect humans. There are various ways in which scholarship approaches this. For example, the way materials, and particularly medieval art, influence us is discussed in the introduction of Grazina Jurkowlaniec, Ika Matyjaszkiewicz and Zuzanna Sarnecka's work on the agency of objects or things; there is a focus on 'the role of materials, not simply as vehicles for conveying immaterial ideas but as affecting senses and having their own agency within various socio-historic networks'.[31] The origin of this agency, however, always seems to be human. Is it not contradictory to have agency created by someone else? Alfred Gell discusses the possibility of humans as 'primary' agents, and things or objects as 'secondary' agents; here, the 'secondary' agent's agency depends on the actions and perception of the 'primary' agent.[32] Carl Knappett and Lambros Malafouris ask similar questions and they describe a 'human-centred view of agents' in scholarship, with objects that merely serve humans. Their initial analysis of what (human) agency entails gives us a little more clarity on this subject: '[w]hen agency is linked strictly to consciousness and intentionality, we have very little scope for

[31] Grażina Jurkowlaniec, Ika Matyjaszkiewicz and Zuzanna Sarnecka, eds., *The Agency of Things in Medieval and Early Modern Art: Materials, Power and Manipulation* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), pp. 8-9.
[32] Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

extending its reach beyond the human'.[33] Agency is here defined by consciousness and intentionality which are understood to be strictly human, but Knappett and Malafouris question whether our understanding of objects should not be expanded; perhaps not to the extent of considering objects as independently functioning agents, but nonetheless broadened in order to challenge notions of anthropocentrism.

The features mentioned as archetypically human by Knappett and Malafouris, namely consciousness and intentionality, are inseparable from our concept of mind; they are always produced by a functioning mind, or at the very least they are considered cognitive processes. These terms are not defined by Knappett and Malafouris in their introduction and I therefore take my definition of intentionality from Gyula Klima, who explains that 'intentionality is intrinsic directedness towards some object', and that this is what distinguishes mental from physical phenomena. Klima concedes that '[m]edieval philosophers routinely described ordinary physical phenomena, such as reflections in mirrors and sounds in the air, as exhibiting intentionality', thereby complicating the earlier distinction significantly.[34] The term 'consciousness' is much more familiar to us and I will therefore use the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition.[35] Given that the purpose of this research project is not to prove that non-human entities expressing apparent mental processes *are* human or agents with cognitive ability, but rather to examine what their constructed 'voices' indicate about their intended purpose, and about early medieval constructs of mind in general, I will mostly use the terms intentionality and consciousness for comparative purposes. What is it that is intended when a non-human entity, which does not have the capacity for cognitive activity, expresses these characteristics? The examples I give in this chapter imply that non-human consciousness and intentionality exists, because non-human agents are designed to show us or *tell* us that they experience these. This leads us back to the 'voices' of non-humans, which I will examine to ultimately discern these features and conclude whether we can speak of non-human agents, or even of objects with constructed signs of mental aptitude.

As I discussed in the first part of this chapter, the voice of the extended mind and of the travelling mind contrast strongly with the established practice we see in many of the other riddles, where a 'voice' does not come from an external agent but where instead, the narrator

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[33] Carl Knappett and Lambros Malafouris, *Material Agency: Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach* (New York, NY: Springer, 2008), p. ix.
[34] Gyula Klima, 'Introduction: Intentionality, Cognition, and Mental Representation in Medieval Philosophy', in *Intentionality, Cognition, and Mental Representation in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by Gyula Klima, pp. 1–8. (p. 1).
[35] 'Consciousness' *OED Online*: 1. Internal knowledge or conviction; the state or fact of being mentally conscious or aware of something.

speaks with the 'voice' of the object that is described. An approach to displays of (what could be seen as) the mental life of objects is taken by James Paz, who, by concentrating on the objects instead of their messages, explains the importance of rethinking 'the conventional divisions between 'animate' human subjects and 'inanimate' nonhuman objects'.[36] He debates whether, when studying an inanimate object, we stand in connection to its maker or what it represents, or whether we 'just' connect with the object itself, disregarding its history of manufacture, he argues that things have agency in the way they affect humans, but also that they possess agency aside from that.[37] Paz builds on the body of scholarly work that considers 'thing theory' and what meaning 'things', or objects, have in our lives, and had in the lives of medieval people.[38] Although Paz presents an original and helpful approach to the voices and agency of medieval objects, he does not consider the connection between expressions that come from non-human objects, and theory on early medieval minds. Taking this approach can assist us in discovering how constructed non-human minds are similar or dissimilar to human minds, and show us whether representations of non-human minds sometimes originate in, or connect with, the human. In contrast to Mize, who considers subjectivity, and to Paz, who looks at the object itself and the agency he argues it has apart from humans, I will consider objects that express a 'voice' in order to identify the implied origins of the 'voice', and to examine what role they play in the containment or representation of minds.

The 'voice' of an object itself often carries more than one message, or refers to more than one identity belonging to itself. It frequently refers to its own appearance or composition. The nature of the object plays a role in the identity of the voice, suggesting that the voice does not just carry one message, but is an expression of, and refers to a more complex entity. Heide Estes explores ways to consider the materiality and identity of objects in past and present, and explains that the Exeter Book riddles,

> […] speak in shifting voices, moving from starting points such as ore deep in the earth or trees under the sky, through the processes of mining or killing them, to descriptions of objects made from them, with no clear or fixed point

[36] Paz, p. 3.
[37] Paz, p. 6.
[38] See in particular Bill Brown, 'Thing Theory' *Critical Inquiry*, 28.1 (2001), pp. 1-22, For a detailed discussion of terms such as 'thing', 'object' or the Old English term 'þing', I refer to Paz's work, which sheds light on the ways in which these terms are used. I will not use the term 'thing' frequently in my discussion, as my focus will primarily be on the context of voice and mental processes, rather than on the theory of material objects.

> of rest. The riddles point to multiplicity rather than allowing for singularity or stability.[39]

Estes indicates then that there is not one 'voice' that changes during the process that the object describes, but that certain 'voices' are replaced or joined by others as the object takes a different shape. This type of 'voice' suggests animation and changeability, even coming from lifeless objects, based on the physical composition of whatever holds the 'voice'. There are some examples in Old English poetry where material composition is emphasised, but rather than the shifting 'voices' that Estes describes, I consider this genre filled with objects that have a single, strong and assertive 'voice' describing a single identity. Potential paradoxical and ambiguous readings, which the riddles definitely encourage, appear to originate in metaphorical subtext than in complexity and changeability of the object's voice. An example of a 'composite voice' is the narrator of *Riddle 26,* which, in contrast to the voice in the bookworm riddle comes from the book itself:

> Mec siþþan wrah
> hæleð hleobordum, hyde beþenede,
> gierede mec mid golde; forþon me gliwedon
> wrætlic weorc smiþa, wire bifongen.[40]
>
> A hero then covered me
> with protective boards, covered with hide,
> adorned me with gold; so that I glitter
> with the wondrous work of smiths, held with wire.

The book describes the process that made it into this specific object. It consists of several elements, some of which were animated, such as 'hide', but it speaks with one voice, referring to one identity. This type of 'voice', often referred to as prosopopoeia; where the object itself speaks, is dictated by the genre and format that many of the riddles adhere to.[41] It is expected that this object will describe itself to an audience, because it is found in a riddle. It is also expected to give us an ambiguous description of itself, but in doing so, the object seems steadfast, displaying its long memory. What we see in *Riddle 26* is that 'voice' can appear to come from the object itself, which is not just a place for safekeeping someone's

[39] Heide Estes, *Anglo-Saxon Literary Landscapes: Ecotheory and the Environmental Imagination* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), p. 146.
[40] 'Riddle 26', *The Exeter Book*, p. 193, ll. 11-14.

extended mental process, but it rather seems to reveal itself to be animate, conscious and aware of its identity.

There are many other examples across the corpus of early medieval riddles where an object appears to speak with a 'voice' of its own. In Exeter Book *Riddle 48,* a *hring* is said to 'speak',

> Ic gefrægn for hæleþum hring gyddian,[42]
> torhtne butan tungan, tila þeah he hlude
> stefne ne cirmde, strongum wordum.
> Sinc for secgum swigende cwæð:
> "Gehæle mec, helpend gæsta."
> Ryne ongietan readan goldes
> guman galdorcwide, gleawe beþencan
> hyra hælo to gode, swa se hring gecwæð.[43]

> I heard a ring tell a story before men,
> bright without tongue, with strong words,
> although it did not shout in a loud voice.
> The treasure silently spoke to the people:
> 'Save me, helper of souls'.
> Men interpret the mystery of the red gold,
> the incantation,
> wisely entrust their health to God, as the ring said.[44]

The answer to *Riddle 48* has long been considered to be a finger-ring, but the solution was more recently and convincingly defined as Old English *husel-disc*, or 'paten' by Megan Cavell in a very thorough paper on this riddle.[45] The object here is clearly sending a message, and the words that indicate communication all refer to a type of voice: the message is *gefrægn*, and the *hring gyddian*. Before we read what the *hring* says, we are explicitly informed of the volume at which it speaks, namely 'not loudly' and 'silently'. Apparently,

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[42] Krapp and Dobbie give 'endean' instead of 'gyddian' in their edition. I follow Cavell in substituting 'gyddian' here, which fits more logically in this sentence and in the context of the poem. Megan Cavell 'Powerful Patens in the Anglo-Saxon Medical Tradition and Exeter Book *Riddle 48*', *Neophilologus* 101.1 (2017), pp. 129-38.
[43] 'Riddle 48', *The Exeter Book*, pp. 205-6, ll. 1-8.
[44] This translation is my own, informed by Cavell's interpretation.
[45] Cavell, pp. 129–38.

this early medieval concept of 'voice' can be heard in the absence of sound. Karkov considers 'voice' to be strongly dependent on audience. She argues that for those who created the Ruthwell Cross, and presumably understood the various inscriptions, the object would hold 'an oral performance spoken in the 'voice' of the cross […] [thus having] an interior from which it speaks its history, and is in this respect a living thing'.[46] Karkov adds to this that 'spoken words always suggest a body and a self that are present'.[47] Does this mean that the object that expresses the message is animated, or does it come to life when there is a person to speak and simultaneously receive the message? This would mean that before a written text is read or spoken, there is no 'voice' and the object has no 'voice'. The message and the interpretation are solely dependent on the receiver. Indeed, Frances McCormack comments that the rhetorical device prosopopoeia 'relies on the vicarious identification of the audience with the object being described'.[48] The word 'voice' becomes only appropriate to describe the message of an object when there is a person who can read the message, and its message only comes to its full expression when that person has the ability to interpret it. Therefore, according to these interpretations, an object only comes to life when it has a particular audience. Karkov suggests that it is the audience that carries out the spoken performance, or the 'voice' that is found on an object, and this seems to be rather different from the kind of voice found in the riddles.[49] Although the *hring* is said to have a silent voice, it is actively speaking, not passively being read, and it is able to bring its audience a message.

Analysing *Riddle 48*, Elizabeth Okasha describes the 'dumb object's "speaking" through the written word' as a 'paradox'. [50] I believe this paradox can be resolved by considering where the voice comes from. There is no indication in either this riddle, nor in *Riddle 59*, which she also refers to, that the 'voice' is written down. Instead, there appears to be communication without writing or audible voice, and meaning outside of speech. This meaning originates somewhere in the object, and is then interpreted. *Riddle 59* also contains the description of a *hring* capable of communicating a message:

> Ic seah in healle hring gyldenne
> men sceawian, modum gleawe,

[46] Karkov, p. 145.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Frances McCormack, 'Those Bloody Trees: The Affectivity of Christ', in *Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Language, Literature and Culture* ed. by Alice Jorgensen, Frances McCormac and Jonathan Wilcox (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 143-62.
[49] Karkov, p. 145.
[50] Elizabeth Okasha, 'Old English "Hring" in Riddles 48 and 59' *Medium Ævum*, 62 (1993), 61-69 (p. 62).

ferþþum frode. Friþospede bæd
god nergende gæste sinum
se þe wende wriþan; word æfter cwæð
hring on hyrede, hælend nemde
tillfremmendra. Him torhte in gemynd
his dryhtnes naman dumba brohte
ond in eagna gesihð, gif þæs æþelan
goldes tacen ongietan cuþe
ond dryhtnes dolg, don swa þæs beages
benne cwædon. Ne mæg þære bene
æniges monnes ungefullodre
godes ealdorburg gæst gesecan,
rodera ceastre. Ræde, se þe wille,
hu ðæs wrætlican wunda cwæden
hringes to hæleþum, þa he in healle wæs
wylted ond wended wloncra folmum.[51]

I saw men in the hall beholding
a golden ring, they are skilful in *modum*,
wise in *ferþþum*. He who turned the ring
sought peaceful prosperity for his spirit
from God the Saviour. Then it spoke a word,
the ring to those who listened. It named the Healer
of those who do good. Clearly into memory
and into the sight of their eyes it silently brought,
the Lord's name, if one could know
the meaning of that noble, golden symbol
and the wounds of the Lord, and do as the wounds
of the ring said. The prayer
of any man, if unfulfilled,
cannot reach God's royal city with his soul,
the fortress of the heavens. Let him who wishes explain

[51] 'Riddle 59', *The Exeter Book*, pp. 209-10, ll. 1-18.

how the wondrous wounds of that ring
spoke to men, when, in the hall,
it was rolled and turned in the hands of the high-minded.

A golden *hring* or circular object is the subject of this riddle. Okasha assumes that in both poems, the *hring* is 'inscribed with a religious text'.[52] There are several examples of early medieval objects that form a cross in a circular shape, which could be associated with a *hring* that is twisted, or wounded. The seventh-century Trumpington Cross is such an example: it has the outer shape of an interrupted circle and contains a full smaller circle in the middle.[53] The highly religious *Riddle 59* may then indeed signify a religious object, connecting individuals to God. Cavell suggests that instead of reading the 'wounds' that the poem refers to as an engraving, it could also refer to the manufacturing process.[54] Although the object is said to have 'wounds', there is also a statement in this poem that tells us that words appear in the mind of the observer. The scholarly ideas of 'voice' being written down or inscribed in these riddles needs to be challenged, as there appears to be both a physical and mental connection between the sender and receiver of the message. This also means that Karkov's theory, which makes the reader or audience the responsible actor in receiving the 'voice', is simply not applicable to certain Old English examples of voice.

The *hring* may be asking for help, but it is anything but helpless in its attempt to draw attention. The intention of the *hring* is communicated to various senses of the receivers; it shows itself to them, makes itself heard and passed around, and it ultimately comes into being in their minds. The *hring* is selective of who it is sending its message to: there is emphasis on worthiness and readiness of the receivers, expressed in the 'modum gleawe', and the 'ferþþum frode' that the men in question possess, and who then 'torhte in gemynd his dryhtnes naman'. The emphasis on its silence, and on inner, personal contemplation and experience of the object's message, increases the possibility that the object is a private or religious one, and it decreases the likelihood that it concerns a secular, decorative finger-ring. This object is meant to voice a message of religion and healing to the people who listen to it, and is thus selecting an audience with a particular type of mentality. Although the *hring* may be a means to connect with the voice of God, it is very much speaking with its own voice,

[52] Okasha, p. 62.
[53] 'The Trumpington Cross', Appendix, Figure 2., The Trumpington Cross, seventh century, pectoral cross, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, Accession No. 2017.58 <https://collections.maa.cam.ac.uk/objects/567097/> [accessed 12 January 2021].
[54] Cavell, p. 134.

attracting attention to itself. What does become clear from both these riddles is that a reason for an object to have a 'voice', and imply that it has a consciousness and therefore agency, can be to evoke a feeling of intimate connection to a human mind, offering something that this person may previously have lacked.

Although it can be questioned what type of *hring Riddle 48* and *59* refer to, there is an example of a ring that definitely indicates a finger-ring and it speaks of itself. An eighth century finger-ring that was found at Wheatley Hill, Durham contains the inscription runic inscription ᚱIᚾᚷ ᛁᚳ ᚻᚠᛏᛏ; Old English '[h]ring ic hatt[æ]', or 'I am called ring'.[55] There has been some scholarly attention to the runic script on this ring, but few people have published on its fascinating message. 'I am called ring' is mostly stating the obvious in describing and naming itself. This type of statement can be found on a variety of early medieval objects, one of the best known examples is the Brussels Cross, which contains the inscription 'Rod is min nama'; Rood is my name.[56] It is unlikely that the object would be described by any other name than *hring*, as the only near-synonym, *beag*, usually refers to bracelets rather than finger-rings.[57] Nor does it seem likely that the object could be confused for anything else; it is approximately the same size and shape as other finger-rings, and would have contained glass or jewels in its bosses, making it an explicitly ornamental object. The message therefore does not so much provide important information to its reader, but rather seeks attention for its apparent consciousness; an indicator of (human) agency. The reader of the inscription is alerted by the ring that it is aware of its identity, and is encouraged to consider this object to be a living, thinking object. Although the reader will be aware of the constructed, fictional nature of this object's 'mind', by reading the inscription they are involved in the communication by the ring, and participate in the idea that some form of mind or of consciousness potentially exists outside the human. This participation does not only open the possibility for the reader that there can be cognitive processes outside of the human body, but it appears to demonstrate it.

Objects can thus be a tool for personal mental improvement, as well as a way of making a connection to other material and immaterial sources. They can also provide a stark contrast to a person's mind and intentions, revealing their own. 'Voice' has so far proven a strong indicator in signalling objects that show self-awareness. Nonetheless, there are

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[55] 'Finger-ring' Appendix, Figure 3., *Finger-ring*, eighth century, Ring, London, The British Museum, Museum number 1995,0902.1 <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1995-0902-1> [accessed 12 January 2021].
[56] *The Brussels Reliquary Cross*, The Cathedral of St Michael and St Gudule.
[57] *A Thesaurus of Old English*: 04.04.10.01 'A Ring'.

examples in Old English literature that suggest that objects can use behaviour instead of 'voice' to demonstrate apparent mental activity. Karin Olsen examines a number of Old English kennings that draw comparisons between ships and horses, such as *wæghengest*, 'wave-horse' and *lagumearh*, 'sea-steed'. She argues that descriptions of animation of ships in the poem Guthlac B, indicate a ship or boat can have 'a will of its own'.[58] The following fragment from *Beowulf* contains a description of the sword that Beowulf uses to fight Grendel's mother, confirming that an object could indeed be held to participate in decision-making and even have the ability to undermine its user.

> Ongeat þa se goda grundwyrgenne,
> merewif mihtig; mægenræs forgeaf
> hildebille, hond sweng ne ofteah,
> þæt hire on hafelan hringmæl agol
> grædig guðleoð. ða se gist onfand
> þæt se beadoleoma bitan nolde,
> aldre sceþðan, ac seo ecg geswac
> ðeodne æt þearfe;[59]
>
> Then the good man [saw] a wolf of the deep,
> the mighty mere-wife; [he gave] a violent attack with the
> battle-sword, his hand did not withdraw,
> so that on her head, the sword with ring-shaped patterns sang
> a greedy war-song. Then the guest discovered
> that the battle-light did not want to bite,
> harm life, but the edge failed
> the prince at his need.

Beowulf's skill is evident, and this passage clearly indicates that he made the right movements to do some damage, and yet the sword declines to oblige him. Gale R. Owen-Crocker examines this passage and states, '[t]he poet personifies the sword (it 'sings'), uses synecdoche ('edge' standing for the sharpened blade) and a kenning ('battle light'), and

[58] Karin Olsen, 'Animated Ships in Old English and Old Norse Poetry', in *Animals and the Symbolic in Medieval Art and Literature*, ed. by L. A. J. R. Houwen (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1997), pp. 53-66 (p. 62).
[59] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 52, ll. 1518-25.

includes the ornament and value of the sword in the description'.[60] The description does not give any indication of whether this sword has a kind of consciousness, but it does become clear that it is not responding to Beowulf's physical movement. In fact, contrarily to functioning as an extension of Beowulf's movements, it appears to sabotage Beowulf and make its decisions on its own. The contraction *nolde*, coming from *ne wolde*, or 'did not want to' shows the possibility of the sword biting, but only by its own choice. Sue Brunning explains that Viking period swords are often described as, for example, 'wound snake, battle snake', or 'corpse snake', and also as objects that can bite.[61] The figurative language of the passage and the behaviour of Beowulf's sword adhere to this tradition, albeit not to his advantage. Brunning refers to a passage in the Poetic Edda where a Valkyrie curses her brother so that the sword he wields will never bite for him.[62] In this case, the object is not necessarily depicted as capable of making choices, but the wielder himself is sabotaged and that affects the sword. Perhaps the result would have been the same had the sword itself been cursed, but in that case the agency affected would have been the object's. The idea of biting, does give this type of agency to the object rather than to its user. Biting is an act performed by a person or animal, or in this case, by an object itself; the sword-user cannot bite someone by means of an object. By describing this object's refusal, the poet shows certain expectations directed to it, and not to its user, which the sword has seemingly decided to ignore. The reversal of expected behaviour suggests, just like 'voice' has proven, that there is an underlying decision made by the object – making the reader suspect there is a mind or a mentality at work to produce this. In this instance, that influence is malign, unlike that of the *hring*.

4.4 Non-human Minds: Animals

Just as there are many cases where an object reveals itself as a thinking substance, there are many descriptions in literature of minds belonging to living animals which interact with, resemble and contrast human minds. Britt Mize discusses various examples where the mind of an object or animal is centred on, or focalised, and he considers such descriptions often to

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[60] Gale R. Owen Crocker, '"Seldom… does the deadly spear rest for long": Weapons and Armour', in *The Material Culture of Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. by Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), pp. 201-30 (p. 213).
[61] Sue Brunning '"(Swinger of) the Serpent of Wounds": Swords and Snakes in the Viking Mind', in *Representing Beasts in Early Medieval England and Scandinavia*, ed. by Michael D. J. Bintley and Thomas J. T. Williams (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), pp. 53-72 (pp. 56-57).
[62] Ibid, p. 57, see 'Helgakviða Hundingsbana II 33', 'The Second Poem of Helgi Hundingsbani', *The Poetic Edda*, ed. by Carolyn Larrington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 128-37.

be poetic formulae. Mize claims that such '[e]pithets […] present themselves as definitions of a subject's essence as it is conceived at that poetic moment rather than as descriptions of a mental state or process'.[63] He compares the description of Sarai in the Old English *Genesis*, who is *ferhðcearig* – anxious in mind– to the description of the whale in the Old English poem *The Whale*, who is *facnes cræftig* –crafty in trickery–, and argues that in both cases the mental state is topicalised over the person or whale itself.[64] This means that the mental state is both the person or animal's characterisation *and* an explanatory motif for their actions, but not an actual insight into their mental processes. While this again indicates that, according to Mize, many moments of insight in minds in Old English literature mostly represent convention, it also shows that the same methods are used to discuss a person's and an animal's mental state. The poem *The Whale* is often interpreted as an allegory, in which the whale represents a demon or devil, and a warning for us not to trust superficial appearances, like the sailors did when they mistook the whale's back for an island. Yet I believe that the literal description of the whale, named Fastitocalon, offers much more than characterisation and convention, especially when we look at it in comparison to the description of the sailors it attacks:

> ðonne gewiciað werigferðe,
> faroðlacende, frecnes ne wenað,
> on þam ealonde æled weccað,
> heahfyr ælað; hæleþ beoþ on wynnum,
> reonigmode, ræste geliste.
> þonne gefeleð facnes cræftig
> þæt him þa ferend on fæste wuniaþ,
> wic weardiað wedres on luste,
> ðonne semninga on sealtne wæg
> mid þa noþe niþer gewiteþ
> garsecges gæst, grund geseceð,
> ond þonne in deaðsele drence bifæsteð
> scipu mid scealcum.[65]

[63] Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities*, p. 58.
[64] Ibid.
[65] 'The Whale', the *Exeter Book*, pp. 171, ll. 19-31.

> Then the weary-minded seafarers
> made camp, imagining no danger
> on that island, making a fire,
> high flames burning; the weary-minded heroes
> became more pleased, longing for rest.
> Then he notices, crafty in trickery,
> That the sailors came upon him,
> guarding a dwelling place, wishing for good weather
> then suddenly in the salty water
> with the boldness down below to see
> the spear-man's ghost, seeking the bottom
> and then in the death-hall drowning
> and fastening the ship with its crew.

The fatigue of the seafarers' minds is stressed twice, in *werigferðe* and *reonigmode*. It is only mental tiredness that is emphasised; there is no mention of physical fatigue. If the seafarers had not been mentally fatigued, they might have noticed that what they landed on was not an island. The sailors' state of mind is stressed, so that the reader does not question their intelligence and blame them for their fate. There is thus a clear reason for aiming attention at the sailors' internal state.

The whale's state of mind is given as a contrast to the sailors', but since the latter already explained the expedition's outcome, it is no longer necessary to know what is going on in the animal's mind. We are informed that the whale is crafty in trickery, *facnes cræftig*, at the moment that it notices the seafarers' presence. Mize states that,

> [w]hether whales are always crafty or only become so when exhausted sailors are in the neighborhood is not an issue: in the only instant that matters to the sailors or to the poet – the fatal instant which (in that case) will be crystallized in the ensuing allegorical interpretation – baleful deception is the whale's defining principle, from which its actions will be understood to proceed.[66]

I disagree with this interpretation; from the perspective of the sailors and the poet it does not matter whether the whale is crafty or hungry, or whatever other motives it might have for killing the sailors, because the sailors have already been shown to have caused their own end

[66] Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities*, p. 59.

by their absent-mindedness. The subjectivity of the whale is therefore important for another reason. Just as the sailors are described as tired in this specific moment, the whale is also described as crafty. But this description is a reaction to the circumstances that present themselves: 'þonne gefeleð facnes cræftig'. There is an indication of time here; the whale notices the situation, and only then is it said to be crafty. Its motive is not clear: we do not know whether it is hungry, angered by the people and the fire on its body, or whether it is defending his domain, frequently described with the kenning 'hron-rad'. Thus what is revealed of the whale's internal state contains more than pure characterization or motive, but it is indicated that this mental state is subject to change and timing. If insight in the whale's mental state is not there to shed more light on the sailors' situation, where does the need for the composer come from to give the whale a thought process? By giving information about the whale's mental process, and characterizing it as an agent, the audience is encouraged to consider the existence and workings of minds outside their own. *The Whale* requires, as do so many early medieval texts, the audience to experiment with extending their own perspective, by temporarily inhabiting another mind.

This literal interpretation of the poem is different from an allegorical one. If we consider the poem to be an allegory, we admit that the whale is not really a whale. It does not possess an animal mind, but instead embodies a devilish, plotting spirit that we are warned against. Paradoxically, considering the poem as an allegory makes the whale less 'other' and more anthropocentric. The allegorical interpretation of *The Whale* is widely accepted by scholarship, and yet we cannot ignore the literal one. Superficial or literal meaning has to be acknowledged in order to reach metaphor or deeper meaning and therefore both are always present when reading such poems. Whilst reading *The Whale* we will therefore both sympathise with or criticise the sailors *and* imagine ourselves to be the sailors. We will consider what goes on in the clever whale's mind *and* imagine it to be a demon in disguise. Both literal and metaphorical meaning lead me to conclude that poems such as these are designed to stretch our minds and imagination – in order to imagine human minds in engagement with other minds and agents, some as allies, or as adversaries, none of whom are one-sided or completely understood.

Whatever interpretation we choose, the description of the whale's mind is similar to those of certain other animals in early medieval culture. The craftiness and low intentions of the whale are mirrored in various descriptions of dragons in art and literature. Although there are not many lengthy descriptions of dragons, the occurrence of dragons in a variety of forms in early medieval material culture and literature is frequent, and they especially appear in

settings of learning and the distribution of wisdom. There are many dragons in marginal decorations of books, or which form parts of initials in these manuscripts, guarding the treasures contained in them. Dragons, as described in literature, seem to be intelligent creatures, yet cunning, and they are prone to evil. In *Maxims II*, the place of the dragon is described among the place of other things in the world,

> Sweord sceal on bearme,
> drihtlic isern. Draca sceal on hlæwe,
> frod, frætwum wlanc. Fisc sceal on wætere
> cynren cennan.[67]
>
> The sword must be in the lap,
> lordly iron. The dragon must be in the mound,
> Wise, proud in treasure. Fish must be in the water,
> Knowing their kind.

According to the maxims, dragons thus naturally have an assigned location, a quality of mind, and a responsibility. The dragon in *Beowulf* adheres to all the aspects of this description. This dragon is explicitly said to have a mind and the ability to plot: 'frecne fyrdraca faehða gemyndig': the fierce fire-dragon, vengeance in mind.[68] Notably, the terms to describe the mind and the part of the body where this is located in the dragon are the same as for humans in *Beowulf*, and the body-part or organ the *hreðer* is involved (l. 2593). Yet there is also an indication that the dragon has a basic, or unchangeable mind; it lived for a long time but it does not improve.

> nacod niðdraca, nihtes fleogeð
> fyre befangen; hyne foldbuend
> (swiðe ondræ)da(ð). He gesecean sceall
> (hea)r(h on) hrusan, þær he hæðen gold
> warað wintrum frod; ne byð him wihte ðy sel.
> Swa se ðeodsceaða þreohund wintra

[67] 'Maxims II', *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, ed. by Elliot van Kirk Dobbie, ASPR 6 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), pp. 55-57, ll. 25-30.
[68] *Klaeber's* Beowulf, p. 92, l. 2689.

heold on hrusa*n* hordærna sum
eacencræftig.[69]

the naked malicious dragon flies by night,
encircled in fire; him earth-dwellers
[…] He has to seek
a dwelling in the ground, where he guards heathen gold,
wise in winters; he is not any better for it
So did the people-damager for three hundred winters
confine to the earth of one of the hoards,
Exceedingly skilled.

This dragon is said to be 'frod', wise, and it appears that this is an assumption based on the dragon's age. This description calls to mind some findings in the previous chapter: one needs to be not only wise in winters, or aged, but actually have acquired wisdom in maturity.[70] Yet it is also established that the dragon is not any better for it. The phrasing of this is similar to the concluding sentence of *Riddle 47*, where the bookworm swallowed the book's words but became none the wiser. This parallel suggests that both of these different kinds of *wyrm* are either unable or unwilling to learn or improve their minds. The dragon shares mental characteristics with the whale, who is also said to be skilful, or *cræftig*, stressing their evil cunning, but also their human characteristics; Beowulf is said to have stealthy craft a few lines later.[71] The insight into these animal minds raises questions on the meaning and use of these shared characteristics, and the abilities of animals and humans to develop them.

The examples of the dragon and the bookworm suggest that these animals have negative characteristics and that there are explicit flaws in their development. Although this appears to set them apart from descriptions of human minds, there is a strong similarity between certain characters in *Beowulf* who share exactly this problem of development, including Heremod. Beowulf's dragon episode has been compared by scholars to the legend of the dragon Fafnir in the poetic Edda. Both these dragons guard a hoard of cursed treasure and fight heroes who kill them by stabbing them from below.[72] Fafnir, however, is said to be

[69] Ibid., p. 78, ll. 2273-80.
[70] See Chapter 3.3 'Mature Minds and Old Age'.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Christine Rauer, *Beowulf and the Dragon: Parallels and Analogues* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), p. 41., Craig Williamson, ed., *'Beowulf' and Other Old English Poems* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p. 226.

transformed in the legend from a dwarf or human, whereas *Beowulf* does not give the same information about its own dragon. Craig Williamson asserts, '[t]he *Beowulf* dragon is not the transformation of a greedy king'.[73] Williamson is right in his reading, but there is a relationship between the dragon and a greedy king in *Beowulf*, although this is a relationship of parallelism and not of transformation. This king, namely Heremod, is explicitly contrasted to Sigemund, who slew Fafnir in the legend. As I have discussed in Chapter 3, Heremod's mind did not develop as his people wished, and he is said to hoard and resort to violence. These characteristics strongly resemble those of the dragon, and even if Heremod does not transform into a dragon like Fafnir did, their similarities in character, and the placement of Heremod's story opposite that of Sigemund, encourages a comparison of their characters. The description of the dragon's mind shows that although wisdom may come with age, the dragon is not improved by it, resembling Heremod's mental development: there is growth, but not the kind that his people wished for. This parallel indicates not only that there is similarity of character possible in the minds of dragons and people, but also that similar problems in development can occur. Animals are not only shown to reflect and contrast features of human minds, but their descriptions show potential exaggerated outcomes of the failure to stabilise and train a mind.

The dragon Fafnir and the dragon in Beowulf are similar in context and description and these are not the only early medieval examples that enable readings of human to animal metamorphoses, familiar from Ovid. These examples can help us explore what the boundaries between human and animal minds are considered to be, and how changeable the minds of either are. The Old English version of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* poses the idea that human and animal minds are intrinsically different. There is an episode in Metre 26, where Apollo's daughter Circe reigns over an island that is visited by Ulysses, who becomes her lover; when his men threaten to leave him, she changes them into animals. Circe transforms people with her magic into wolves, boars and lions; whichever they were most like in their human life:

> Næfdon hi mare monnum gelices,
> eorðbuendum, ðonne ingeþonc;
> hæfde anra gehwylc his agen mod,
> þæt wæs þeah swiðe sorgum gebunden

[73] Williamson, p. 226.

for ðæm earfoðum þe him on sæton.
Hwæt, ða dysegan men þe ðysum drycræftum
longe gelyfdon, leasum spellum,
wisson hwæðre þæt þæt gewit ne mæg
mod onwendan monna ænig
mid drycræftum, þeah hio gedon meahte
þæt ða lichoman lange þrage
onwend wurdon.[74]

They had nothing remaining similar to men,
to earth dwellers, except for their minds;
each one had his own mind
which was however greatly bound with sorrows
because of the troubles which oppressed it.
Oh those foolish people who for a long time believed in
these magical arts, false stories,
knew however that no one can
change the understanding or the mind
with sorcery, though she could make
the body be changed
for a long time.[75]

The individuality of people's minds is once again stressed, even though they are grouped together and they are completely changed by magic. One thing that is described as a contrasting feature to other men, is that these men's minds are bound. They are seemingly weighed down with their sorrows and misfortune. The narrator is not completely clear on how seriously and how literally this story needs to be taken; it is indicated that only foolish people believe in stories such as this one, yet simultaneously it is asserted factually that sorcery cannot change minds, but only the body. Thus, the reason that Circe did not change minds from human to animal is not part of her particular idea of punishment, but because it was not possible. The reason for this is not a limitation to her magic, but, as is suggested in the section that follows, their minds are already not dissimilar from those of animals: '[…] ðæt hit nauht unriht nære þæt mon þa yfelwillendan men hete netenu oððe wildior, þeah hi

[74] *The Old English Boethius*, Vol. 1, p. 507, ll. 93-104.
[75] The Old English Boethius, Vol. 2, p. 176.

mannes onlicnesse hæbben', 'that it would not be unjust for people of evil intent to be called animals or wild beasts, though they have a likeness of a man'.[76] Apparently, the interiority of humans and animals can hold the opposite of their exterior, and Circe's magic actually corrected this discrepancy by altering the bodily appearance. The Old English version of the *Consolation of Philosophy* gives more attention to and explanation for the aspect of minds and change of minds than the original Latin, indicating a particular interest in this subject by its early medieval author and presumably its audience.[77] One of the most significant alterations made in the Old English version that demonstrate this, is the change from the character Lady Philosophy to Wisdom, and the character of Boethius is referred to as Mod: two names that focus attention on the inner workings of the mind. This fragment specifically details the situation and mental conditions of Ulysses' men for its audience to explore, as we have seen encouraged across a range of texts and objects. However, this text does not focus on the mind of the animal, but on that of the person who transformed. It shows the limits of a mind's movement and changeability: it may be possible to extend mental processes and even inhabit other minds, but a person's own, individual mind will always remain unchangeable in essence. This text shows the suggested permanence of the individual's mind as it goes through and after transformation.

4.5 Hybrid Minds

The examples discussed in this chapter so far demonstrate that there are different types of mind described to exist outside of the human body in early medieval literature and material culture. I have shown that these indicate the potential mobility, changeability of, and communication between minds, but also that minds outside the human body are exposed to certain risks, and that there are clear limits to what they are capable of. The constructed categories in this chapter have provided a framework that enabled a discussion of certain ideas and phenomena relating to minds, which are visible in texts and objects from early medieval England. Despite the results of using the categories I created in this chapter to separate different types of externalised minds, there are plenty of cases that do not fall into one of these categories, but that meet the criteria for several. Now that some patterns have been established, it is possible to see more clearly how certain texts or objects do not adhere to these and may cross the boundaries of my set categories. I call those types of mind that adhere to more than one category 'hybrid minds'. As a final case study in this chapter I will

[76] *The Old English Boethius*, Vol.1, p. 508, ll. 2-3., *The Old English Boethius*, Vol. 2, p. 177.
[77] Boethius, *Philosophiae Consolatio*, p. 76.

now concentrate attention on the Franks Casket, which I identify as embodying or describing a hybrid mind. While the Franks Casket can be considered to be an object, it is also made of animal bone, and describes this animal's inner experience. It therefore corresponds to both the categories of object *and* animal. Furthermore, the way in which the casket resembles descriptions of the concept of the mind as container, as discussed in earlier chapters, allows us to imagine the casket to function as the embodiment of a mind in itself. Considering the Franks Casket a hybrid object can help us uncover another type of mind and shed light on the flexibility of minds as they cross the boundaries of my constructed categories.

The potential for a type of mental awareness to exist in objects becomes more explicit when objects are made from materials that were once living things. Examples of this range from the 'Bible' riddle, to the cross's retelling of its origins as a tree in *The Dream of the Rood*, to a whale sharing its final experience before its bone was made into the Franks Casket. In the case of the latter, the material continues to bear the voice of this whale, whilst also becoming an entirely new object, depicting different scenes and bearing various messages that do not belong to the whale. The Franks Casket, or Auzon Casket, has five decorated panels.[78] The front panel contains a depiction of a person who has been identified as Weland the Smith, and another image that shows the adoration of the Magi.[79] These scenes are surrounded by the following text:

ᚠᛁᛋᚳ᛫ ᚠᛚᚩᛞᚢ᛫ ᚩᚻᚩᚠ᛫ ᚩᚾ᛫ ᚠᚳ

ᛗᚾᛒᛖᚱᛁᚷ

ᚹᚪᚱᚦ᛫ ᚷᚪ᛫ ᛋᚱᛁᚳ᛫ ᚷᚱᚩᚱᚾ᛫ ᚦᚫᚱ᛫ ᚻᛖ᛫ ᚩᚾ᛫ ᚷᚱᛖᚪᛏ᛫ ᚷᛁᛋᚹᚩᛗ᛫

ᚻᚱᚩᚾᚫᛋᛒᚪᚾ

Fisk flodu ahof on ferg-
enberig
Warþ ga-sric grorn þær he on greut giswom
Hronæsban

The fish was cast onto the
Mountain cliff

[78] 'Franks Casket', Appendix, Figure 4.
[79] Karkov, p. 148.

The *gasric*[80] grew sad where he swam onto the sand
Whale's bone.

This text clearly refers to the origins of the casket; the whale was stranded, and its bones were posthumously used as the materials for this object. Perhaps this information is shared because the material was considered special or valuable, but there seems to be no obvious reason for the emotional state of the whale to be explicitly described. According to Mize, such internal, emotional descriptions seem to follow custom, and we are not always able to explain why these insights are included in texts and objects. Karkov similarly poses that descriptions such as the one on the front panel are part of the conventions of Old English riddles, mirroring Mize's suggestion that this simply adheres to the traditions of Old English poetry.[81] I would like to question whether these rich and diverse descriptions should really be put down to the same convention. To carve messages about mental processes on particularly valuable objects, such as the Franks Casket, which do not necessarily have a surface space for long poems, must have held significance for the poet or recipient. The message encourages its reader to empathize with the whale, and to acknowledge that such animals are capable of emotions. Perhaps this message is carved into the casket to remind its recipient that a sacrifice has been made to create it.

The whalebone casket is the subject of a vast number of studies, few of them commenting on what the scenes on it mean for early medieval English perception of minds, yet certain aspects of the design can be re-interpreted to reveal a diverse portrayal of what minds were considered to be. Paz comments on the theme of transformation in identities, as several figures on the casket appear in more than one role.[82] He also describes the front panel as contradictory and purposefully misleading. A focus on the theme of transformation, however, considering the runic text on the front panel in the context in which it is placed, can provide us with an even more specific message. The combination of the text referring to the whale, who was re-made into this casket, the depiction of Weland, who is carving a special cup out of someone's skull, and the adoration of Christ, who came back to life after crucifixion, appears to have a common theme: all of these symbols show the potential for resurrection, and the ability to live on in a different shape after death. This panel of the casket implies that objects hold the inherent ability to retain something of their previous life. Any

[80] This is a hapax legomen, and therefore scholars are not certain of its translation. Paz and other scholars follow Page in translating *gasric* as 'the king or terror'.
[81] Karkov, p. 148., Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities.*
[82] Paz, p. 100.

living creature therefore could be capable of transformation, while still essentially being itself. Paz compares the *Gasric* to the whale *Fastitocalon*, with its deceptive qualities in the Old English poem *The Whale*, and argues that the material from such an animal may well have been considered to retain some of their qualities.[83] Given the sustained attention to the theme of transformation on the front panel, the casket is putting forward the idea that the change from one shape to another does not just allow some personal traits to accidentally survive, but that a change in its materiality can actually provide a more stable and more permanent environment for a person or animal's inner life. The casket's key message thus erases rigid distinctions between animate and inanimate objects, living and dead, and raises questions about the permanence of mind in comparison to changeable matter.

The Franks Casket is not only a vehicle for messages or 'voices', and not only the embodiment of a whale's immortality, but the shape of the casket itself contributes to the association with minds and mental processes that its inscriptions incite. Old English vocabulary for 'mind' is rich in references to containment, hoards and boxes, as compound nouns such as *hordcofa*[84], *modhord*[85], and *ferðloca*[86] demonstrate, and the mind is frequently described as a receptacle or container in early medieval literature.[87] In this chapter I paid attention to the potential of minds to open and release something – the the *hyge* can escape its *hreþerlocan* in the *Seafarer* and return to its locker. We do not know for certain what the Franks Casket may have contained, but even if its inside is empty now, its outside functions as a container: it holds the stories placed there by people for safekeeping, and as such plays the part of an extended mind. Objects such as the Franks Casket show many different sides of what early medieval minds can be and of what their preservation can mean. I will return to the concept of conservation of minds in Chapter 5.

Conclusion

The way we interpret descriptions of extended, relocated and non-human minds in early medieval literature from England needs to be reconsidered. There are many suggestions in Old English literature that minds and mental awareness are present outside the human body. Nevertheless, scholarship has maintained focus on 'voice' and poetic convention, instead of

[83] Paz, p. 132.
[84] 'hordcofa' literally *hoard-cove*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: A place for treasure, a retired chamber, closet, a place where the thoughts are stored, the breast, heart.
[85] 'modhord' literally *mind-hoard*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the mind.
[86] 'ferðloca' literally *mind-locker*. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: The soul's enclosure, bosom.
[87] See Mize, 'The Representation', and Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*.

raising questions regarding the underlying constructed origin of this. Scholars such as Karkov have described 'voices' as messages and symbols that can be found on objects, whereas some 'voices' found in Old English literature rather refer to sound produced by a human, object or by a mind. Locating 'voice' has been a way for me to detect entrances into a cognitive world that lies behind it. I have established that 'voices' often lead to the (imagined) presence of various types of mind, which sometimes show awareness of their situation or identity, and sometimes reveal emotion or knowledge, and always attempt to provoke thought or engagement from their human audience. The findings in this chapter have led me to the conclusion that 'voice' indicates the presence of a mind, which is a connection that has not been made in this field before. Scholarship has previously only analysed the 'voice' part of a long and complex process that involves human minds and constructed non-human minds calling out from places they do not seem to belong. The descriptions of 'voice' in this chapter are varied; they can refer to a person or object's (constructed) experience, or simply imply that there is mental experience. Based on this, I do not offer one new concept or definition of 'voice' in this chapter, but a very different way of thinking about what 'voice' does in connection with minds. All types of 'voices' have the ability to deliver a meaningful constructed expression of selfhood or identification, or insight into the mental experience of a human, animal or object.

I have questioned why so much effort has been made to expose this imagined mental world which humans can explore and even extend their own mental processes into, but which equally suggests that non-human minds present agency, autonomy and possibility. Why is there such a rich variety of voices pointing to non-human minds in the literature? My research findings in this chapter show that there are descriptions indicating the instability of the human mind and I have identified this as a possible reason to endeavour to or experiment with the idea of extending a human mind into an object, in order to safeguard a cognitive process. Early medieval literature from England has already informed us that human minds were believed to be unstable, and many of the examples in this chapter offer solutions to anchor themselves in the external world. This instability of mind appears to cause some human minds to leave their container and travel. However, the problems with instability only explain part of the phenomenon in which minds appear outside the human body. Certain descriptions of objects and by objects, such as the *hring* riddles, encourage its viewer to acknowledge the existence of a non-human mind. In some cases the purpose of this is to bring about change in their own mind in a particular way, such as religious practice or conversion. Yet descriptions of minds or mental processes in animals have less effect on the

human mind and instead invite an audience to temporarily inhabit and consider the workings of their mind.

There are some clear limits to the ways in which humans can change, extend and develop their minds: a person may apparently only make changes within the boundaries of that individual's mind. Circe's transformations show us that only the bodies of Ulysses' men can be altered, and each must keep their own mind. The suggestion is there that these men already have animal minds, and that their bodies are simply made to match them. Nonetheless, this particular idea of individuality and unchangeability of mental 'essence' runs through early medieval English culture, evident in the front panel on the Franks Casket, which shows that a person or animal, whether living or dead, may change in matter but will have permanence in its mind. Various texts and objects in this chapter, the Franks Casket being the most apparent, show more than one potential function with regards to mental expansion and exploration. The descriptions of categories I have suggested for this chapter (namely extended, travelling and non-human) are not always entirely suitable to apply to the texts and objects that I have given as examples. Some early medieval textual descriptions or objects barely match the criteria of one category, and some fit in two or three categories at once. However, the categories I have put in place, and the ways in which they match or diverge from the early medieval descriptions of voices and minds, provide a framework that tells us more about concepts of mind. This exploratory framework also gives us an indication of whether it is possible or sensible at all to create models or theories about these concepts of mind. I have critiqued aspects of present-day scholarly models and paradigms in earlier chapters, and the type of tentative approach I have taken in this chapter differentiates itself by offering structure and identifying patterns without ignoring information the original sources provide. What I have presented in this chapter is an experiment: a first attempt to connect voice and mind, whilst distinguishing completely different types of mind that exist outside of the human body. The descriptions in texts and on objects that I have focused on should not be part of a separate field of study focused only on material culture, or only on traditions in poetry, but should be actively connected to the study of human minds in early medieval England. Close study of constructed minds or mental activity outside the human body shows that these minds were created to investigate, improve and reflect human minds, as well as providing insight into the mental worlds of the non-human.

Chapter 5. Minds after death: Relics

The final chapter of this thesis will contribute to the overall aim of developing a more nuanced and complete understanding of early medieval minds, in a different way than the previous chapters have. This thesis has thus far scrutinised scholarly approaches to early medieval English literature on minds, and demonstrated the necessity of including previously neglected texts and perspectives on what minds can be and how they were thought to function. While descriptions of diversity and variability of minds during stages of life have been explored, this chapter centres on descriptions of minds that belong to deceased people. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, minds were frequently imagined as existing and acting in places outside of the human body, manifesting themselves by displaying 'voice'. Some of these minds appear to be 'extensions' of human minds: cognitive processes placed on or in a material object for safekeeping, or to spread a message. This chapter continues this line of thought and argues that these ways of preserving a part of the mind, or a cognitive process, were not only applied to non-human objects, but that dead human bodies were also viewed as a potential foundation for a mind. I will show in this chapter that the presence of a saint's relics frequently indicated the imagined presence of their mind. In doing so, I am returning to questions raised by my findings in Chapter 2, where I showed that some form of consciousness in the body survived death in the *Lorsch Riddle*. Similarly, part of the mind is presumed to survive by the soul in *Soul and Body II,* as well as in *Vercelli Homily IV,* in which the soul blames the body for its choices during life and its eternal damnation.[1] My focus in this chapter will primarily be on the apparent survival of a mind within the human remains of several saints, and the difference between incorrupt and corrupted, or fully articulated versus disarticulated bodies as a factor in this survival. By examining various written accounts and some material objects belonging to key figures, such as contact relics and reliquaries, I consider whether these different types of relics were perceived differently. I will question whether in some cases human minds were considered to have the ability to materially survive death and remain contained in their own body parts or belongings.

This chapter proposes a new way of thinking about selected early medieval relics, reconciling early medieval thought on minds with the study of objects and voices, and with religious practice and narrative. The contrast between human and non-human 'voices' signalling the presence of minds, as I have shown in the previous chapter, is not as pronounced when we discuss human relics, which behave and are perceived as both person

[1] See Chapter 2.2 'The Mind as Incorporeal and Corporeal Entity'.

and object. The introduction of the descriptions, presentation, and functioning of relics to this project's previously examined findings on minds opens up new avenues for scholarly research, presenting the possibility that relics were considered to be part of, or in communication with, the human mental world. The scholarly study of the relics of Christian saints has logically been dominated by approaches focusing on religion, cults and miracles, but the identity and inner life of the saint appears to be considered lost by scholars at the point of death; the saint is then treated as a passive body, or an object – albeit with very special abilities and properties.[2] Medieval minds have not been included in previous research on relics, and doing so can shed new light on the crucial link between decay, preservation and death for the way people might have thought about holy bodies. The provocative suggestions in early medieval texts open up the possibility that minds were sometimes considered to continue existing after death, leading to new ways of understanding cultural significance of primary material.

In order to shed some light on the potential connection between minds and relics, I will combine the study of relics with concepts of minds. I question whether, if the mind was considered to be a physical part of the body, it was thought of as having the potential to survive death as well, as distinct from the soul. The type of source where this is most frequently and explicitly suggested is hagiography, where many authors describe dead bodies to behave as if they still contain a cognitive process and carry out judgement. First, I will explore various theories on relics in current scholarship, and question whether the recognition and consideration of minds and cognitive behaviour as described in the primary sources may change existing perceptions of relics and miracles. Scholarly knowledge on various relics, reliquaries and the many miracles they performed and facilitated leads me to an examination of their connection with the minds of the saints. The main sections of this chapter investigate the thesis that ideas that relics could contain minds were present in the early medieval period. I examine various cases where relics are described in ways implying that they embodied or contained a mind or mental processes associated with the saint. Section 5.1 centres specifically on incorrupt bodies, their apparent capacity for mental activity and their value to a medieval audience. I consider descriptions of miracles performed by the saint or their relics before and after death, questioning who they are ascribed to: God or the saint. Furthermore, I question whether they change in nature after the saint's body has died. Then, in section 5.2, I look at descriptions of disarticulated relics and question whether these are described to be less

[2] Paz, pp. 149, 170.

cognitively active than fully articulated bodies, and whether they are less frequently indicated to be the agent, or deciding force behind a performed miracle. Innovative new research has been carried out in recent years on contact relics and reliquaries and their function as extension of the saint, but comparisons with non-human minds have not been made, and I will address this in the final part of this chapter.[3] I argue that the bodies and relics of saints are frequently described in ways consistent with them having a functioning mind. The combination of my findings on minds with scholarly literature on relics, and with related primary texts and objects, is the next step in coming to a more complete understanding of the way mental life was understood in early medieval England.

This chapter proposes that the way the treatment and behaviour of relics is described in early medieval sources holds many similarities with the way minds were described to function. The impact that relics had on their environment as a result of their performed miracles as well as their materiality has received a lot of scholarly attention, yet this impact is often described to originate in somewhere other than in the relic. The previous scholarship on relics is insufficient in helping us understand a key aspect of their function – namely their role as perceived containers of holy minds after death. It is in this discovery that the main findings of this chapter lie: this enduring relationship between the mind and the dead saint's body enables very personal involvement of the saint in their post-mortem miracles, which is strikingly different from the depersonalised agency of disarticulated relics and contact relics. While there has been plenty of attention for the significance of miracles, the impact of these narratives and of physical relics in the Christian world dominates scholarly research, sometimes to the detriment of consideration of other functions of relics, and clear and complete focus on how they were perceived by their audiences. I will proceed to discuss some important scholarly theories on the substance and value of relics, on which I build this chapter. This context is needed to demonstrate that, although the described influence and agency of dead bodies in the early medieval period have been investigated, there is a significant lack of comparisons and connections to the study of minds, cognitive processes and the continuation of those after death in scholarship. This chapter will address this and offer suggestions to fill that gap.

The value of relics, according to narrators of hagiographies, lies in their ability to perform holy miracles. Antonina Harbus and Karin Olsen define the purpose of miracles thus:

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[3] Cynthia Hahn, *The Reliquary Effect: Enshrining the Sacred Object* (London: Reaktion, 2017)., Malo, *Relics and Writing*.

'theologically, miracles act as signs from God that the saint is already one of the saved, even before death and resurrection'.[4] Post-mortem miracles are, then, phenomena that happen around the saint, but they are not achieved by the saint. There is plenty of evidence for this conception in the primary sources. Throughout the early medieval period, different hagiographical accounts have exposed different patterns in miracle production before and after the death of saints, and as a result, some hagiographers interpreted this as a shift in God's intention. For example, Ælfric of Eynsham, a late tenth- and early eleventh-century hagiographer, included a statement in his homily for Ascension Day, based on a homily by St Gregory, which separates the older miracles of Christianity from the present.[5] He argued that the miracles on earth ceased when the religion spread and that at the time of writing, only spiritual, but not physical miracles should be venerated. He asserted that physical miracles belong to the past and that they could potentially be produced by evil.[6] How did this shift in emphasis affect the perception of relics and of the ways in which miracle production was understood? Ælfric described there to be a great contrast in described production of miracles by relics in comparison to the earlier period of Christianity in early medieval England regarding the agency of saints.[7] I will discuss some hagiographical narratives in section 5.1 and question who it is that performs the miracles, but first I will consider some scholarly takes on the early medieval perception of relics.

The influence of relics and their treatment by contemporaries from early Christianity onwards has, under the influence of Peter Brown's scholarship, been described in terms of physical impact on space and place. Brown considers relics to be, or to affect, a place where heaven and earth can connect, but also where various other types of 'joining' take place.[8] He indicates that, in the course of the development of the cults of saints in Europe, 'the Christian cults of saints rapidly began to involve the digging up, the moving, the dismemberment […] of the bones of the dead, and, frequently, the placing of these in areas from which the dead had once been excluded'. The approach to these bodies by the cults of saints thus facilitated accessibility of spaces and influenced the topography of the late antique and early medieval world, affecting religious and everyday life, and the boundaries between the living and the

[4] Antonina Harbus and Karin E. Olsen, 'Introduction: Transforming Miracles in Medieval Hagiography', in *Miracles and the Miraculous in Medieval Germanic and Latin Literature*, ed. by Antonina Harbus and Karin Olsen (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), p. 2.
[5] *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I. pp. 304-6.
[6] Malcolm R. Godden, 'Ælfric's Saints' Lives and the Problem of Miracles', *Leeds Studies in English* 16, (1985), 83-110 (p. 84).
[7] Ibid.
[8] Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 1, 10.

dead.[9] Robyn Malo, looking at dominant voices in medieval scholarship on relics, considers the focus on 'joining' of heaven and earth, now to be one of the 'conventions' in discourse on medieval relics. While Brown considers the transformative effect of such relics on physical places in the Christian world, Malo recognises that these observations about relics are appropriate but dominate the field of medieval relic research and do not offer a comprehensive insight into the complexity of medieval perception and usage of relics.[10] Malo thus urges a shift from Brown's leading perceptions to an approach that is more focused on relics as varied types of objects, an approach that influences this study.

Ideas of place and space connect very well with the study of relics as objects; scholars such as James Paz put forward distinct ideas regarding the space that a saint influences through their relics and hagiographic texts. According to Paz, these relics function to assemble and connect elements of Christianity, just as 'things' are described by him as assemblies.[11] Paz considers these various relics and texts to all play a part in the same narrative, transforming them from background objects to 'things', 'displaying [their own] agency and altering the human world'.[12] For instance, he states that '[t]he saintly body of Cuthbert verifies the existence of God and, moreover, does so within a particular place. This verification is reliant on perception; the human body becomes the site and perceiver of 'signs' of the reality and authority of God'.[13] Hence, it appears that a living human becomes a lifeless object in death, which then becomes an animated 'thing', representing God. Paz's argument, while persuasive, leaves a few paths unexplored. As I will show, the hagiographer of St Cuthbert does not seem to treat their saint as an animated 'thing' or only as vessel for the power of God, but they insist from the moment of the saint's death that his body looks and acts as if it were alive. There is thus a continual comparison with the living saint. Other hagiographers similarly refer to the performer of miracles after the death of the saints by their personal names as well as, and sometimes instead of, God's, and frequently attribute the decisions of judgement to the dead saint. This poses the question contemplated below; were these relics considered to be more human than object, and what is it that is present or represented in addition to God? Although medieval relics clearly affect space and impact on living human beings around them, I argue that their significance does not only lie in their externalised miraculous influence, but that much of their value and agency depends on their

[9] Brown, pp. 4-5.
[10] P. Brown, pp. 10-11., Malo, pp. 5, 14.
[11] Paz, pp. 97, 140.
[12] Ibid., p. 141. See discussion of 'thing theory' in Chapter 4.3: 'Non-human Minds. Objects'.
[13] Ibid., p. 145.

identity and materiality. As we shall see below in section 5.1 and 5.2, records suggest that some saints were considered as participating in their environment and as taking decisions with regard to the miracles they performed after their death. We should therefore not only regard them as an assembly of new elements, but also explore what is represented as a continuation of the saint before death. The significant variation in described behaviour of different types of relics can lead us to a better understanding of what it is that causes certain forms of agency to remain after death.

The materiality or substance, and the intactness of relics are key to the way they were perceived, and yet it is difficult to tell what the 'essence' of a relic is. What does a relic need to consist of in order to be 'active'? There is some dispute in scholarship on what the answer to this question is. Roughly speaking, medieval Christian relics come in two different variations: corporeal parts (or entire bodies) of saints and holy figures, and items that have been in contact with the (relics of a) saint. The latter are sometimes called contact relics, or more specifically *brandea*: pieces of cloth that had been in contact with a saint's relic, or secondary relics.[14] David Rollason explains that in the early days of Christianity in England, it was likely that many of the relics that were sent over to England were secondary, 'in view of Gregory the Great's resistance to fragmentation of saints' remains'.[15] Over the centuries that followed, more corporeal relics were acquired in English churches, which shows that attitudes changed. Fragmented bodies and small relics were widespread and valuable, as evident considering relic lists and considering the worth of some of the reliquaries alone, surviving from early medieval England.[16] However, some of the findings presented in this chapter suggest that it is, at the very least, uncertain if these were regarded to be as valuable as entire bodies. The saints' bodies that, according to their hagiographers, remained incorrupt are evidently valued for their miraculous preservation and for resisting fragmentation. Whether, and for how long, this desire for incorrupt bodies remained dominant in early medieval England is uncertain and there is evidence that bodies, which had long remained intact, were disarticulated and moved to various locations in the early tenth century.[17] I analyse the devotion to uncorrupted and fully articulated bodies in section 5.1, in order to demonstrate that when the identity and substance of relics affect their perception by contemporaries, this becomes a factor in the performance of particular relics, and their

[14] Rollason, p. 24.
[15] Ibid.
[16] See for example the Brussels Cross and the Franks Casket, discussed in Chapter 5.3 'Contact Relics and Reliquaries'.
[17] Smith, p. 88.

abilities should not be ascribed solely to their connection with heaven. This raises a range of questions about the division of activity and influence of various types of relics and saints. These will be addressed, but for our purpose, the key issues raised are those of the activity of the saints' bodily remains in comparison to heavenly influence, and, following from that, evidence of described activity of the saints' minds.

I have established that more explicit information on whether the saint should be considered as personally involved in their relics' post-mortem activities, can further our understanding of minds as well as relics. If the saint is indeed described as personally involved, are there specific factors that influence how active the saint is? One of the main questions this investigation prompts is what type of presence or activity the saint shows, and whether we should consider this to be the presence of their mind. In his work on relics, Brown analyses the 'presence' of saints in their bodily remains and environment. He describes graves of saints at the end of the sixth century as 'centers of ecclesiastical life', because 'the saint in Heaven was believed to be "present" at his tomb on earth'.[18] He explains that the inscription at the grave of St Martin of Tours expresses the joining of heaven and earth: 'Hic conditus est sanctae memoriae Martinus episcopus. Cuius anima in manu Dei est, sed hic totus est Praesens manifestus omni gratia virtutum': 'Here lies Martin the bishop, of holy memory, whose soul is in the hand of God; but he is fully here, present and made plain in miracles of every kind'.[19] Although his soul is in heaven, Martin is complete on earth. Miracles are produced that reveal his presence, but it does not seem that he is an active agent in their production. By contrast, other scholars have pointed out examples that suggest that there was an idea that (part of) a saint's cognitive functioning, or self-awareness could survive in their relics. Jennifer Neville concentrates on descriptions of the Virgin Mary in the Blicking Homilies, and asserts that 'even when she 'gives up the ghost', she does not give up her sense of herself and her demands for special attention. […]; her soul-less body calls out to Christ as he makes her burial arrangements'.[20] Neville argues, in spite of the deceased Mary's lack of autonomy, that she shares 'some of the requirements of a modern self: she possesses inwardness, emotions, self-consciousness, and perhaps even a personality', and that this 'self' is not her soul but her body.[21] All these traits are visible *after* Mary's death. In the case of

[18] P. Brown, p. 3.
[19] Ibid., p. 4.
[20] Jennifer Neville, 'Selves, Souls and Bodies: The Assumption of the Virgin in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Miracles and the Miraculous*, ed. by Antonina Harbus and Karin Olsen (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 141-54 (pp. 148-49).
[21] Neville, pp. 149-50.

Mary, one might argue that the focus on her body is logical, since it was her body that secured her reputation by carrying Christ. Yet, we see similar traits in the behaviour of other saints' bodies, as I will discuss shortly. Cynthia Hahn refers to relics' 'personhood and agency', as she states that in the early medieval period, '[r]elics were inserted into ceremonies and practices that treated them as if they actually were the saints they represented (a treatment entirely congruent with relic doctrine)'.[22] Therefore, in the eyes of their environment, as well as evident by their described personal 'behaviour', relics claim attention for the person they belong(ed) to.

Ideas that a saint is mentally present and active after death are, therefore, not unusual in relic research, but the ways in which this is manifested need to be examined more closely. The link between relic and mind becomes perhaps more apparent when the link between relics and intentionality is studied. I briefly considered the notions of consciousness and intentionality as features that indicate human agency in Chapter 4, and intentionality would in this case imply that the saint holds a mental state that is concentrated on something specific.[23] It is not their body that is active, but it is the saint's purpose, or intentionality that causes miraculous results. I consider properties and behaviours such as selfhood, intentionality and judgement to be properties of the saint's own mind, for the following reasons. Unlike the minds I discussed in Chapter 4, the minds of relics do not behave as if they represent someone else's cognitive process or a cognitive process that is not human. Furthermore, it is made very clear in hagiography that the saint is the person who should be addressed, who is, sometimes together with God, in charge of judgement and of producing a miracle. Finally, I will demonstrate that the mind of the saint displays the same characteristics and interests through its intentionality after death as it did before, by the similarity in their performance of miracles before and after death.

My approach in this investigation relies on the early medieval concept of the mind as a corporeal entity, which I discussed in Chapter 2.[24] Hagiographical literature occasionally sheds light on the location and functioning of a saint's mind. It is specified in the recounting of St Oswald of Worcester's youth that he was exceptionally intelligent, and that his his mental faculty was associated with his heart:

[22] Hahn, p. 53.
[23] Klima, p. 1.
[24] See Chapter 2.2 'The Mind as Incorporeal and Corporeal Entity'.

> Sitiebant ipsius penetralia cordis largiter haurire semper doctrinam sacre eruditionis, quam conditor clementius contulit in pectore beati tyronis- quem 'presciuit et predestinauit' ante sue natiuitatis tempora preesse ecclesie filiis.[25]

Michael Lapidge translates this as,

> The recesses of his mind were continually thirsting to drink in abundance the instruction of divine learning, which the creator mercifully implanted in the heart of His blessed recruit – whom 'He had foreseen and predestined' to be foremost among the sons of the Church even before the time of his birth.[26]

Lapidge adds footnotes to explain that 'prenetralia cordis' has its precursor in the works of classical authors and Alcuin, suggesting that he finds the phrasing an odd choice. This is confirmed by his translation of cordis as 'mind', instead of 'heart'. This brief passage confirms what we have seen in other genres of literature before: namely that it was not exceptional for the mind to be described as physically located in the chest. The indications that saints' bodies contain properties of their minds should be taken as confirmation that the mind was sometimes considered part of the body and not of the soul. The idea that the mind was part of the body can explain that cognitive functioning does not depart the saint when the soul does. It is also not solely the body that remains in charge after death: the saint's body or relics do not behave or move, it is only the 'organ' of the mind contained in it that still appears to function. The physical mind here is therefore potentially capable of surviving death, in a genre of literature where this has not previously been acknowledged.

5.1 Incorrupt and Fully Articulated Bodies

Descriptions of relics in early medieval English texts suggest that they can function as perceived containers of holy minds after death: not only do they physically represent the deceased saint, but the relic responds to external impulses. Incorrupt bodies signify a category of relics that receives special attention, both from the hagiographers and from the saints themselves. I will question whether this conveys the belief that some relics are more likely than others to possess a mind, and I will answer this by concentrating on some case studies below. This section of the chapter considers incorrupt bodies and cases where the saint shows notable concern for the intactness of their body after death, which supports the thesis that the survival of the body relates to the presence of the mind.

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[25] *Byrhtferth of Ramsey*, pp. 32, 34.
[26] *Byrhtferth of Ramsey*, pp. 33, 35.

First of all, it is important to note that there appears to be a preference for incorrupt and complete relics, but that this is not a requirement for a functioning relic in early medieval England. In fact, according to,

> the normative medieval theology of relics – that of *pars pro toto*: a tiny fraction of a fragmented body was as holy and as potent as the complete, undivided body. This was combined with an affirmation that saints remained whole and entire in their corporeal identities, however fragmented their physical remains might become.[27]

Relics appear in many shapes and sizes, but the literature indicates that fully articulated bodies are special and that fragmentation impairs the saint in some ways. Saints often appear to be aware during life that their body will still have a purpose after their death. In the Old English *Life of St Margaret*, of which two versions survive in manuscripts dating from the eleventh- and early twelfth century, a conversation about her relics precedes Margaret's death.[28] She is told in no uncertain terms that she will be beheaded and what will happen to her after:

> […] englas cumaþ ongean þe and neamaþ þin heafod and lædaþ hit on neorxnawonge; and þin lichama biþ wurþful mid mannum, þæt swa hwa swa ahrineþ þine reliquias, of þære tide fram swa hwylcre untrumnesse swa he hæfþ he biþ gehæld.[29]

> […] angels will come to you and take your head and bear it to paradise; and your body will be honoured among men, so that whoever touches your relics will be healed from that moment on of whatever infirmity he has.[30]

Despite the disarticulated state of her body, Margaret is told that it will be a fully functioning relic. The cause of Margaret's death is her head being separated from her body and therefore, her relic is never intact. Rather than having two of Margaret's relics on earth, the angels take her head to heaven, for unknown reasons. Is it perhaps preferred that a decapitated relic leaves only one part of it on earth? Margaret is told what will happen to her body, but not what her part in this will be; her soul will go to heaven and it seems that she will be an

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[27] Smith, p. 74.
[28] *The Old English Lives of St Margaret* ed. by Mary Clayton and Hugh Magennis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 84, 92.
[29] Ibid., p. 132.
[30] Ibid., pp. 133-5.

inactive participant in the miracles that will take place at the site of her body. Thus, Margaret's narrative indicates a partiality to having a single incomplete relic on earth, but it also reveals that she will have little agency over what happens to it after death. As we will see below, the latter may be a direct result of the first, and complete relics retain more intentionality than incomplete ones.

There are cases where the state of the saint's body appears to make it particularly suitable to be a relic with discernible cognitive properties. An example is what is described to happen to the body of St Cuthbert in the anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert* and Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert*. The first of these texts was composed in Lindisfarne somewhere around the year 700, and the second shortly after, before the year 721.[31] Cuthbert was a well-known and popular Northumbrian saint throughout the early medieval period and he is said to have miraculously healed dozens of people during his life. Near the end of his life, Cuthbert arranges to be buried upon his death in fine clothes that he never wore during life, showing the intention or anticipation of remaining preserved, or at least of being looked at.[32] When he dies, it is asserted immediately that his body still looked as if it was alive and it was treated with special care:

> animam habens cum Christo gaudentem, corpus incorruptibile requiescens, et quasi dormiens in sepulchre lapideo, honorabiliter in basilica deposuerunt.[33]
>
> His soul rejoicing in Christ, his body remained incorrupt, resting as though asleep in his stone coffin; and so they placed him with honour in the church.[34]

Cuthbert's soul has departed but every part of his body remains unchanged and whole. Eleven years later, the sepulchre where the body lay was opened to start his translation. This means either moving the whole body to a new resting place, or removing parts of the body, which then become individual relics. According to the *Lives*, the monks found that Cuthbert had not decayed at all.[35] Soon after this discovery, Cuthbert's body once again began to perform miracles of the same type that he performed before his death, thus 'proving' that his body still contained this miraculous potential he was known for. Robyn Malo considers a description in a thirteenth-century relic list from Durham Cathedral, which, centuries after his death, still lists that Cuthbert's dead body looks as if it were alive: '[c]orpus sancti Cuthberti

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[31] Colgrave, ed., *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, p. 13.
[32] 'The Anonymous life of St Cuthbert', in *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, pp. 130-31.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid, pp. 131-33., 'Bede's Life of St Cuthbert', *Two lives of Saint Cuthbert*, pp. 141-307.

cum carne et ossibus, et totum integrum, quasi adhuc esset vivus', '[t]he body of St Cuthbert, with its flesh and bones and totally whole, as if it were living'.[36] Even centuries later, the state of his body is noted. This description shows that Cuthbert's body, though dead, receives more attention and thus has a different status compared to other relics on this list. The reason for this might be the importance of the miracle of his preservation rather than the material consequences of this event, but since other relics are rarely listed with their produced miracles, it can reasonably be concluded that incorruption is a particular material property that affects his position.

God is praised far more frequently and explicitly than the bodily remains of saints in hagiography, and perhaps because of this, it is often assumed in present-day scholarship that what a functioning relic needs is a connection between the remains and God. Yet, we can see the influence of relics' intactness in the estimation of their value by their audience.[37] In fact, the intactness and incorruption of relics is prioritised in many documents throughout the medieval period. Studies show that later in the medieval period, there was a hierarchy in the value of relics, and fully articulated early medieval relics retain prominent positions. Robyn Malo considers several medieval inventory lists of relics that indicate a desire for, and representation of complete bodies over body parts. A fourteenth century list refers in ambiguous terms to the head of St Swithun, an early medieval saint and bishop of Winchester, which was part of a relic collection in Canterbury. This head had been in Canterbury from 1006 and is listed as 'corpus'; suggesting a whole body, but the rest of Swithun's body had remained at Winchester. Malo argues that when this 'corpus' precedes 'caput', which clearly indicates a separated head, in the list, it is clear that the description is purposefully ambivalent.[38] It is not clear whether this appraisal of 'whole' relics was equally important throughout the early medieval period; after all, Swithun's body was initially separated into smaller relics. However, relic lists such as these indicate preferences for whole relics and prominently display early medieval saints such as Swithun. An Old English list of relics confirms this habit of prioritising fully articulated saints by purposefully obscuring its contents. This list contains a large amount of items which are said to have been donated to Exeter by King Aethelstan, the list probably dating from the second half of the eleventh

[36] Malo, p. 42.
[37] Malo, p. 29, 44.
[38] Malo, p. 40, 42.

century.[39] This list contains many items, most of which are simply identified by the name of the saint it belongs to. There is little information given about the relic itself and its shape or size, but there are details given about the martyrdom of the saint or miracles produced through their relics. It has been suggested that this relic list was not so much intended to be an inventory, but rather that its suitability to be read for a mass or procession demonstrates that could have functioned as a sermon.[40] Relic lists were thus publicly read or displayed, exhibiting the wealth of the church and the activity of the relics. The lack of details as to what type of relic the church owned, implies that it may have been a common belief that whole relics were more important or more active. This custom suggests again that there was a desire for complete relics, and that the condition of a relic might have influence on its activity.

An important factor in the potential effects of incorruptibility on the function of a body after death, is the regard for the mind as physical body part. If the mind was considered to be a bodily organ, it would presumably remain intact as long as the rest of the body did, and perhaps even retain some of its function. We have already seen evidence of this possibility in the *Lorsch Riddle*, where a form of consciousness survived in the body, and in *Soul and Body II*, where the soul continued to address something in the body after death. In the latter poem, vivid descriptions of bodily decay insinuate that the physical mind cannot be functional anymore after death, while the soul has become incorporeal but remains active.[41] This suggests that the survival of the mind depends on the maintenance and state of the body. It also indicates that decay of the mind in turn depends on the decay of the body, and yet the soul addresses something in the decaying body. This conception of the mind leads us to reason that if the body remains preserved in some way, or wholly incorrupt, that might conserve the mind. The argument I make in this chapter, namely that early medieval people considered the wholeness of a dead body to be an important factor in its ability to retain mental capacity, is at odds with many of the other lessons we are taught by hagiography. Traditionally it is understood that the saints will, during their lives, always prioritise their immortal soul over their body. The *Life of Saint Juliana* illustrates that,

Ic þære sawle ma

[39] Patrick W. Conner, 'Appendix 2, The Records of Relics in Exeter, (Old English Relic List Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. D. 2.16, fols. 8r–14r)', *Anglo-Saxon Exeter: A Tenth-Century Cultural History* (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 1993), p. 173.
[40] Frances Rose-Troup, 'The *Ancient Monastery* of St Mary and St Peter at Exeter, 680–1050', *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art*, 63 (1931), 179-220 (p. 212)., Conner, pp. 175.
[41] Chapter 2.2 'The Mind as Incorporeal and Corporeal Entity'.

Georner gyme ymb þæs gæstes forwyrd
Þonne þæs lichoman, se þe on legre sceal
Weorðan in worulde wyrme to hroþor,
Bifolen in foldan.[42]

My soul
Is what I care more about –my spirit's ruin-
Than about the decay of my body
Which will become the sustenance of worms
Buried in the earth.

Juliana cares only about her soul, which will go to heaven after her death. As Leslie Lockett has shown, '[s]ince the soul is immortal and the body is destined to rot in the grave, the needs of the soul ought to be valued and pursued above those of the body'.[43] However, this is not always the case for the dead bodies of saints, which as we have seen, may have other purposes than to rot. The status and locus of Juliana's mind are not discussed, and this leads us back to questions about the corporeality of the mind in various genres of early medieval English literature. If, for contemporaries, physical preservation of a body brought with it the possibility of preservation of a physical mind, then what influence would they have thought that mind had? Moreover, are these incorrupt relics different in behaviour than other relics? In order to answer these questions, I will now look at descriptions of saints' miracles, performed before and after their death.

Saints are generally described to have shown intention in healing during life, as a prelude to showing that their miracles will continue after death. Their hagiographies usually describe a few detailed miracles produced during their lives, and some that occur at the site of their relics after their deaths. The type of miracles performed by one saint are often different in nature from the miracles of other saints. For instance, the miracles performed by St Cuthbert have common themes, related to food and shelter, animals, infirmity, and demon possession; there are several miracles by Cuthbert that fit into each of those categories, and very few that do not match these themes.[44] Conversely, other saints' miracles have little to do with these issues and they perform miracles that solve different problems. For example, early

[42]'The Life of St Juliana', *The Exeter Book*, p. 124-5 ll. 413-17.
[43] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 389.
[44] 'Bede's Life of St Cuthbert', *Two lives of Saint Cuthbert*, pp. 141-307.

medieval saint Swithun of Winchester, primarily healed specific types of illness, such as blindness, paralysis, and lameness, while saint Guthlac of Crowland's miracles relate to birds, blindness and possession.[45] The miracles a saint performs after their death are often similar to the ones performed before their death, showing personal intentionality, rather than a generic element to this phenomenon. These miracles are traditionally viewed as being granted by God, who is said to be ultimately responsible for them. An explicit example of this can be found in the anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert*, where the narrator says: '[…] sine mora spiritu Dei auxiliante (ut spiritus sanctus nescit tarda molimina) vivificatum atque, antiquae sanitati redditum aspexi', or 'I beheld him brought back to life and restored to his former health by the help of the Spirit of God'.[46] Cuthbert carries out the healing by God's grace. However, there are also indications that miraculous power is inherent to the saint. While Cuthbert's miracles are more frequently ascribed to God, especially early in his life and early in his death, later in his life there are passages describing miracles where God's name is markedly absent:

> Noster itaque episcopus audiens infirmitatem qua premebatur puella, rogantibus nobis misertus est ei, unguens eam crisma benediction sua consecrata, quae ab illa hora cito uirtute proficiens, dolorem de die in diem deserens, sanitati pristinae reddita est.[47]
>
> And so our bishop, hearing of the illness with which the maiden was afflicted, on our request took pity on her, anointed her with chrism consecrated by his blessing, and she quickly recovered strength from that hour; the pain left her gradually from day to day, and she was restored to her former health.[48]

It is clearly Cuthbert's, here referred to as the bishop, decision to take pity, bless the oil himself, and thereby heal the woman. Cuthbert is the agent performing judgement, and taking action.

The hagiographical focus is often on saints as individuals, with miracles indicative of the saint's agency: the saint decides whether someone is worthy of healing. This emphasis on arbitration is evident in the anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert*, where an event is described where

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[45] *Ælfric and the Cult of Saints in Late Anglo-Saxon England,* ed. by Mechthild Gretsch, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 34 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 229., *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac,* ed. by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956, repr. 1985).
[46] Book 4, Chapter VII in 'The Anonymous life of St Cuthbert', *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, pp. 122- 23.
[47] Book 4, Chapter IV in 'The Anonymous life of St Cuthbert', *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, p. 116.
[48] Ibid., p. 117.

Cuthbert is followed by a cleric, who spies on him all night and becomes very ill. The next day, the cleric confesses to Cuthbert what he witnessed, and Cuthbert forgives and heals him on the condition that the cleric will not tell anyone what he saw, until after Cuthbert's death: 'frater autem sic uouens et perficiens, benedictus et saluatus ab eo exiit'; 'The brother made the vow and kept it afterwards and departed with his blessing, healed'.[49] Only after the cleric makes the vow, does Cuthbert heal him. The performance of certain miracles is thus closely linked to the judgement and approval of the saint, and they can, therefore, be considered to have acted on their own account. This analysis differs from some traditional interpretations of early medieval lives of saints, which often rely on the notion that the saint is ultimately, or even exclusively, a vessel for God's divine power.[50] As we will see, in some texts, the saint's judgement is described as having continued after their death as well, emphasising their personal involvement.

Even though saints seemingly contributed judgement when performing a miracle during their life, according to some theory on relics, the purpose of miracles is primarily to prove the saints' worthiness and to demonstrate that they are saved.[51] The saint's autonomy or judgement in this would therefore be of secondary importance to the production of the miracle itself, and would presumably not be required after their death. Since the soul departs, and the body decays after death, transformation seems an accurate word to describe this process. Nonetheless, in much of the literature, death does not appear to transform an autonomous person into a vessel of holy power, but it rather preserves something that is already there: namely the power of the saint to interfere and perform miracles under particular circumstances. We have already seen an emphasis on continuation after death; bodies refuse to change, and there are similarities in miracle production. The question of what it is that is described to remain, to depart, or to change in a saint after death is highly complex. Returning to the shift in mentality with regards to miracles, as described by Ælfric of Eynsham, it appears that Ælfric and his contemporaries interpreted miracles as only performed by God and that there is no agency ascribed to the deceased saint. At least, this is what Malcolm R. Godden logically interprets Ælfric's view on miracles in his homily on Ascension Day to be: 'in the beginning God worked miracles through His own person; subsequently He performed them through the apostles and saints; in the present, He performs

[49] Ibid., pp. 82-83.
[50] Karolyn Kinane, 'The Cross as Interpretive Guide for Ælfric's Homilies and Saints ' Lives', in *The Place of the Cross in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. by Catherine E. Karkov, Sarah Larratt Keefer, Karen Louise Jolly (Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 96-112, (p. 104).
[51] Harbus and Olsen, 'Introduction: Transforming Miracles', p. 2.

them at the tombs of saints (not, that is, through the living saint)'.[52] Godden then points out that indeed, many of the more recent miracles known in Ælfric's community are post-mortem events, and gives the miracles of Edmund, Swithun and some other saints as an example. Yet, as I will demonstrate, Edmund and Swithun are described to be very much involved in their post-mortem miracles. Like Godden's interpretation of Ælfric, James Paz does not consider the death of a saint so much to be a transformation, but rather a replacement. Paz suggests that the living saint disappears in death, but that his role is taken over by the relics:

> [a]s well as acting as an assembly [of various elements gathered into a distinct whole], the saintly body is also a thing that crosses the boundaries between life and death, animate and inanimate, organic and artefactual. When St Cuthbert becomes absent in death, the relics associated with his body serve to extend his afterlife and actively carry his presence across time.[53]

What is not clear here though, is what Paz means by 'his presence'. This is used as an evasive term, and Paz does not draw the conclusion that needs to be drawn: that some level of continued mental function is being indicated. I have shown that the saint remains active in giving judgement and performing miracles, indicating that their mind may still be functional. After death, if the miracle is initiated by or ascribed to the saint instead of God, we should not consider the saint to be a bridge, vessel or an assembly, but question whether the source of the miracle and decision-making is the same as it was before death.

It appears that it is not only the miracles of healing and aid that remain remarkably similar in nature after death, but there are also peculiar miraculous occurrences that solely focus on the selfhood and intactness of the saint. The consistency in the aforementioned miracles emphasises continuity of individuality, but another type of individuality or selfhood appears after death that is strongly focused on the body. Jennifer Neville has examined the miracles that Mary demanded after her death, which only functioned to magnify and celebrate her, and many early medieval saints are equally eager to maintain their reputation. These miracles most frequently appear when prompted, or when the saint's body is threatened in some way. Cynthia Hahn explains that there were procedures in the later medieval period, where 'relics could be "put to the test", in other words burned, to ascertain whether they were genuine, much in the way of witches who were subject to trial by fire to determine whether

[52] Godden, 'Ælfric's Saints' Lives and the Problem of Miracles', p. 85.
[53] Ibid., pp. 139-40.

they had magical powers or not'.[54] It appears that this type of test already had its origin in the early medieval period, as a similar procedure was carried out on Cuthbert's body, whose hair was cut off and held to a flame by a man named Alfred, to test it.[55] Notably, this does not seem to have been a test as much as proof that the body of the saint was indeed holy or miraculous. Cuthbert's body was also cared for as if he were alive, and his hair was brushed in the first half of the eleventh century. It seems that Cuthbert's body withstood those tests, or rather, proved his holiness, as it still appeared as incorrupt on a relic list centuries later. Although it may have been acceptable for relics to be tested, as we will see below, Alfred received punishment for his interference with other relics. Relics' response to testing is expected or provoked in these sources. Hahn continues that,

> [o]ne sort of saintly social interaction, 'relic humiliation', although rare, is a fascinating and radical confirmation of the medieval belief that the saint resided in his or her relics. If a community believed its patron was not responding to their prayers, they had recourse – in effect, they shamed the saint, overturning and reversing the usual veneration.[56]

In spite of the infrequent occurrence of practices such as relic 'testing', relics seem to have been considered a primary point of contact with the saint, as well as a site of heavenly miracles.

While the testing of relics may have been uncommon, there were plenty of cases where sceptics mocked or questioned the accounts they had heard of the saint, followed by unsolicited and seemingly personal responses from the relics. In Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, the deceased St Swithun of Winchester appeared to various people in their dreams, giving instructions for the translation of his body, and worship of God. Many miracles of healing were performed at his grave. However, one day someone decided to impersonate Swithun in front of some other men:

> He woffode ða swa lange mid wordum dyslice
> oðþæt he feoll geswongen swylce he sawl-leas wære
> and hine man bær ham to his bædde sona
> and he læg swa lange in his lifes orwene

[54] Hahn, p. 50.
[55] John Crook, *English Medieval Shrines* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), p. 1. This story appears in Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio*, ed. by Rollason, p. 162.
[56] Hahn, p. 53.

His magas ða æt nextan þone mann feredon
to þam halgan swiþune and he sylf andette
his dyslican word þe he dyrstigelice spræc
and bæd him forgifnysse and he wearð þa gehæled.[57]

He thus blasphemed a long time with foolish words,
until he fell silenced, as if he were lifeless,
and they bare him straightaway home to his bed.
He lay thus a long time, despairing of his life;
then at last his kinsmen carried the man
to Saint Swithhun, and he himself confessed
his foolish words, that he had presumptuously spoken,
and asked pardon from him, and thereon he was made whole.

There is a reference here directly to St Swithun, not to his body or his soul. Swithun is somehow aware of the insult and he is personally offended. The mockery is perhaps perceived as damaging for his reputation and an apology is required. Swithun is the agent who judges this man's fault, and he makes the decision to forgive him, thereby curing him. This is one of many passages in this text where Swithun is the sole agent, and God is not mentioned as intervening and does not receive recognition.

There are several other texts that contain stories of personal offence or punishment for questioning the dead saint's authority. Notably, a common theme in these is the insistence of a disbeliever to look upon a saint's uncorrupted body. Examples are the punishment of a canon who looked at Æthelthryth, who is said to have remained incorrupt after her death, even though nobody actually succeeded in looking at her.[58] According to the twelfth-century *Liber Eliensis*, the canon is killed by the saint before he is able to ascertain what she looks like.[59] A similar miracle in the same narrative led to the blinding of a Viking who attempted to look at the body of the saint.[60] It thus does not only seem to be the relic lists that conceal the physical status of the bodies and body parts a church contained, but in the narratives, relics themselves equally avoid close scrutiny in favour of faith in incorruption. I will explore

[57] Ælfric 'Saint Swithun, Bishop', *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, Vol. I, p. 460, ll. 298-305.
[58] E.O. Blake, ed., *Liber Eliensis* Camden Third Series (London: Royal Historical Society, 1962), pp. 228–31.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., p. 56.

this theme further by shedding more light on the contrast between fully articulated and disarticulated bodies in the following section on disarticulated bodies.

5.2 Disarticulated bodies

While disarticulated relics existed in early medieval England, the levels of resistance to disarticulation from the saints themselves suggest that it is viewed as an attack on the saints' presence. As section 5.1 indicates, early medieval hagiographers emphasise that the link between mind and body is not viewed as being broken in death, and intactness of the body plays a significant role in this. I have already shown both the great appreciation for uncorrupted bodies, and the discomfort with disarticulated bodies, in cases such as the beheading of St Margaret. St Margaret only left one relic on earth after her disarticulation when angels her head to heaven, but other saints actively withstood dismemberment themselves. This section of the chapter will consider post-mortem miracles that somehow protect the saint's relics. It also examines reasons given for the importance of intactness, and comparisons with disarticulated relics show a significant decrease in the saints' involvement or abilities in case of the latter. The striking contrast between the forms of agency displayed by these different types of relics will enable us to consider the potential for the saints' minds to remain active in cases where the body remains whole.

Resistance to fragmentation primarily occurs after death: during life, the saints show themselves willing to die as martyrs, and one type of death does not appear to be more preferential to them than another. Like Margaret, St Edmund is also said to have been decapitated. According to Ælfric's *Life of St Edmund,* the saint's separated head is hidden by his executioners while the body is left for Edmund's people to find, who are not only concerned about their leader's death but also particularly concerned about his disarticulation: 'and wurde swiðe sarige for his slege on mode. And huru þæt hi næfdon þæt heafod to þam bodige. (136-137)'; '[…] and [they] were very sore at heart because of his murder, and chiefly because they had not the head with the body.' Robert Mills explains that the Vikings responsible for this dislocation appear to have had some reasons for their actions: '[i]ntent on maintaining the division of Edmund's body into pieces (presumably to ensure that he really does remain dead), the Danes hide the martyr's decapitated head in brambles'.[61] It is not entirely clear why Mills thinks that the Danes would be worried about Edmund's resurrection: was it a common belief that whole bodies held the potential to come to life

[61] Robert Mills, 'Talking Heads, or, A Tale of Two Clerics', *Disembodied Heads in Medieval and Early Modern Culture,* ed. by Barbara Baert, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 31-58 (p. 38).

again? According to Ælfric's *Life of St Edmund*, the saint's head was hidden in the forest by his executioners, but a wolf came to protect the head from harm, and when Edmund's men tried to find the head and called out to it:

> Hi eodan þa secende and symle clypigende.
> swa swa hit gewunelic is þa*m* ðe on wuda gað oft.
> Hwær eart þu nu gefera? and him *and*wyrde þæt heafod
> Her, her, her and swa gelome clypode
> andswarigende him eallum swa oft swa heora ænig clypode.[62]
>
> They went on seeking and always calling out,
> as is often the custom of those who go through woods;
> 'Where are you now, comrade?' And the head answered them:
> 'Here, here, here.' And so it cried out continually,
> answering them all, as often as any of them called.

The disarticulated head appears to be alive and has a voice. Given the separated state of the head from the body, this voice should be just as unexpected as the voice of the *hring* or the Ruthwell Cross I discussed in Chapter 4. The head is, in the entire section, only described as body-part, and repetitively called 'heafod', but it is not until the head and body are reunited that they are referred to as the saint –'þam halgan'(l.171)– again. Not only is the body incomplete during this episode, the lack of personal references to the saint indicates that it is perhaps not considered to fully represent Edmund. Yet, the voice coming from the head demonstrates animation, suggesting that the head could be a functioning relic on its own. In Abbo de Fleury's *Passio Sancti Eadmundi*, written in 869, it is narrated that, 'Illud respondebat, designando locum, patria lingua dicens, Her, her, her. Quod interpretatum Latinus sermo exprimit, Hic, hic hic'.[63] 'He responded, indicating his location, speaking in his mother tongue, Here, here, here. Which can be understood in Latin speech as, Hic, hic, hic'.[64] The Latin text thus maintains that the head was speaking in English, confirming that the voice's identity matches the saint's. The purpose of calling out, though, is to be found and there is no question that the head needs to be reunited with the body, so that Edmund's body

[62] 'Life of St Edmund', *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, Vol. II, p. 324, ll. 148-52.
[63] 'Passio S. Eadmundi, regis et martyris', *Three Lives of English Saints*, ed. by Michael Winterbottom (Toronto: Centre for Medieval Studies, 1972), pp. 67–87 (p. 81).
[64] Ibid.

and head were then buried together. Years later, a church was built and the body was translated:

> þa wæs micel wundor þæt he wæs eall swa gehal
> swylce he cucu wære, mid clænum lichaman
> and his swura wæs gehalod þe ær wæs forslagen
> and wæs swylce an seolcen þræd embe his swuran ræd
> mannum to swutelunge hu he ofslagen wæs.[65]
>
> Then there was a great miracle that he was just as intact
> as if he were alive, with a pure body,
> and his neck was healed, which was cut through before,
> and it was as if there was a red silken thread around his neck
> to show men how he was slain.

It is said that Edmund's undecayed body is evidence of his unblemished, and apparently virginal life. Furthermore, his neck shows a reminder of the beheading and so his body becomes a memorial to his life. However, it also produces miracles after his death. Edmund's body appears alive to such an extent that his hair and finger-nails continue growing, which are both cut by a devout widow: 'on scryne healdan to halig-dome on weofode', 'to keep them in a shrine as relics on the altar' (l. 194). The removal of hair and nails from the body is seemingly regarded differently from the removal of bigger body-parts, such as the head. Despite the acknowledgement of the small relics that the widow gathers, the miracles Edmund produces shield his body and his property. In Ælfric's *Life*, some thieves try to steal the treasures that had been brought to honour Edmund, and 'se halga wer he wundorlice geband'; the holy man miraculously bound them.[66] In the same narrative, a man who came to Edmund's shrine insisted on seeing him, upon which he was immediately struck with some sort of terminal madness.[67] It is not just looking that was not permitted, but an attempt to disassemble Edmunds relic was severely punished. Samson, who was abbot of Bury St Edmunds from 1185-1210, reports in *De Miraculis* the efforts of Abbot Leofstan to test Edmund's relic and see if his head could easily be removed by pulling on it.[68] He was

[65] Ælfric 'St Edmund, King and Martyr', *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, Vol. II, p. 326-28. ll. 176-80.
[66] Ibid., p. 328, l. 207.
[67] Ibid., p. 330, ll. 231-38.
[68] Abbot Samson' 'Opus de Miraculis Sancte Ædmundi' *Memorials of St Edmund's Abbey* I, ed. by Thomas Arnold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 107-208 (pp. lv, 134).

punished by being partially paralysed.[69] Edmund's body is in all these examples emphatically shielded, kept intact, and the saint appears to be personally active in protecting himself and his surroundings.

There are cases where the saint's resistance against the disarticulation of their relics becomes even more explicit, and calls attention to residual cognitive functioning. Such a case is found in a description of the translation of Alchmund, Bishop of Hexham from 767-780/1 in the *Historia regum*.[70] This narration tells us that Alfred Westou, the same person who brushed and held Cuthbert's hair to a flame, is charged to translate Alchmund's body to a worthier resting place. In the process, Alfred takes one of Alchmund's finger joints, with the purpose of bringing this relic to Durham. St Alchmund then appears in someone's dream with the following speech:

> Quid est quod facere voluistis? Putastis membris desectum me in ecclesiam referre, in qua Deo et sancto Andrese apostolo ejus integro corpore et spiritu servivi ? Surge ergo, et contestare coram omni populo ut corpori meo citius restituatur quod inconsulte inde ablatum est, alioquin me de loco in quo nunc sum nullatenus movere poteritis.[71]
>
> What is it that you meant to do? Do you think that you can carry me, with my members cut into pieces, into the church in which I served God and his apostle Saint Andrew, with my whole body and spirit intact? Arise then, and state for all the people that that which has been taken without asking from my body must quickly be restored. If not, you will be completely unable to move me from my current position.

Curiously, St Alchmund does not appear in the dream of the person for whom the message is intended. I briefly discussed dream portents and messages in Chapter 3 of this thesis, where I concluded that the recipient of the dream is not always capable of interpretation in early medieval literature, but dreams can instead be received by a person deemed suitable for other reasons.[72] In this particular case, one can imagine that Alfred is not considered a highly deserving recipient of the saint's miraculous message. Another reason for the message to be

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[69] Ibid., p. 134
[70] Crook, *English Medieval Shrines*, p. 100.
[71] Symeon of Durham, 'Historia Regum §51-52', *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius hoc est Dunhelmensis ecclesie*, ed. by D.W. Rollason (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 47-50.
[72] See Chapter 3.2 'Minds in Adulthood: Temporary States'.

indirect, is that the receiver is charged with sharing the message and thereby becoming the voice of the saint. St Alchmund protests against the fragmentation of his body, which appears to be complete but not necessarily incorrupt. He suggests that his complete body and spirit were needed to serve God and St Andrew before his death, and that apparently, he needs all parts of his body after death. There is the implication that he is present in his body when he refers to himself being carried, and also of his presence of mind when he says he could have been asked. He does not punish Alfred, but embarrasses him by refusing to have his body moved. The mind and body connection, which is retained when the saint becomes one, or several, relics, is made obvious in this text. The way in which this connection works, however, remains oblique; Alchmund's spirit is referenced, not his mind, and yet his judgement and determination imply that there must be a mind present, and that its state depends on the state of the body. I have shown various theories on the way the relationship between body, mind and soul might function in early medieval English literature in Chapter 2 and concluded that there is evidence for more than one location for the mind to have been considered.[73] Hagiographic literature makes it clear that, after death, the soul is in heaven and the body on earth. There is no mentioning of where the mind remains, yet descriptions such as Alchmund's demonstrate that the link between mind and body is not broken in death, and that further disarticulation would impede the saint in his service.

While it is evident that there is a preference for fully articulated relics, there are narratives about disarticulated relics that are active in producing miracles, seemingly without being hindered by their fragmentation. An example is the performance of miracles by St Oswald of Northumbria after his death, although performance is perhaps not an appropriate term, as the miracles described only appear to be very inactively produced through the saint's relics. Bede, in his retelling of this story, initially neglects to inform his readers about the nature of Oswald's death or the intactness of his body, but we are told later that Oswald's head and hands were separated from his body.[74] Bede describes how the location where Oswald died becomes a place of healing, even after his body is removed, and how the soil from that same location was used to cure the sick. Oswald's explicit intervention is not expressed by Bede at all: he is absent from these events. While Oswald's relics are accessible in a monastery, there is an emphasis on the usage of soil, which has been in contact with the water used to wash his relics, making for a very indirect contact relic. It seems that Oswald's

[73] See Chapter 2.3 'The Location of the Mind'.
[74] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 253.

fragmented bodily relics are not preferred over contact relics for the production of miracles. I will discuss the importance of contact relics below, however, the emphasis on the judgement and actions of the saint that we see in uncorrupted bodies, is here replaced by a focus on the miracles themselves. These miracles occur in association with the saint, but proximity to him, or contact with him is not required. It is noteworthy that, unlike we can observe in examples shown of fully articulated saints, Oswald is infrequently named, and rather referred to as 'ossa', (244, 246); the bones, and 'reliquiae' (246); the relics.[75] These descriptions render Oswald more like objects than human parts, contrasting with the personal descriptions of, for example, Cuthbert's body. Oswald's relics are depersonalised and inactive. This example of a disarticulated saint's relic shows a very different type of afterlife, in which any form of the saint's mental activity appears to be absent. There is thus a relationship between the condition of the relics and the identification by others, and the former appears to affect the agency expressed by the behaviour of relics. Narratives like Bede's on Oswald tend to reinforce the importance of complete incorruptibility for presenting the saint's mental functions.

5.3 Contact Relics and Reliquaries

The place of contact relics and reliquaries in early medieval English culture seems distinct from that of whole bodies, and is perhaps more similar to the way in which some of the objects discussed in Chapter 4 were viewed. Although there appears to be a strong preference for relics that consist of complete bodies, disarticulated bodies were by no means rare, and they were treated as valuable items with the potential to produce miracles. Julia M. H. Smith summarises how, '[…] by a process of 'holy contagion', the sanctity of saints' bodies could be transferred to associated objects – items of clothing, dust from the grave, and the like'.[76] Indeed, even objects that were not part of the saint, but belonged to them, or were touched by them, could become contact relics; they were venerated and they had the potential to start behaving like bodily relics through their production of miracles. Smith considers contact relics in light of the *pars pro toto* theory, where a small relic or contact relic is considered just as powerful and capable of miracle production as a whole body. Robin Malo also questions whether that notion was dominant throughout the middle ages. She argues that as early as the sixth century, contact relics were presented as if they were bodies, or even 'invented' to fit particular shrines.[77] Does this mean that these contact relics were given the

[75] Ibid.
[76] Smith, p. 74.
[77] Malo, p. 42.

same importance as bodily relics or even seen as functioning bodies, or that their inferiority was hidden by the design of reliquaries and their documented descriptions? The present section will show that contact relics are indeed described as active, but not in the same way as bodily relics.

Small relics and contact relics were often encased in reliquaries, which sometimes appeared to participate in the influence and significance of their contents, and affect perceivers. Reliquaries usually covered and hid their (contact) relics completely, becoming the only visual and tangible element: '[i]f relics' spiritual meaning was mediated by the containers which enclosed them, their concealment transformed them into objects of great material worth, rendering the valueless invaluable'.[78] This section will contain analyses of several objects that fall into one or both of the categories of contact relics and reliquaries, with the purpose of determining whether and how they are perceived similarly or differently from the bodily relics I discussed above, and consequently, whether they show any activity that might be interpreted as 'cognitive'. Ultimately, I argue that contact relics do not behave as an extension of the saints they are associated with, even though they derive their miraculous potential from the saint. Yet, unlike the objects associated with extended minds in Chapter 4, they represent themselves, speak with their own 'voice', and do not necessarily represent the saint they were in contact with by means of their identity.

The saints' connection to objects around them is often very explicit, but this does not necessarily make these objects contact relics. St Edmund's reaction to material belongings being stolen from the area in which his deceased body lay demonstrated an attachment after death that does not just extend to his bodily remains, but also to his personal possessions or materials dedicated to him. While these items were not described as contact relics, they were kept in close proximity to him and the saint evidently wished for them to remain there. When belongings *are* considered to be contact relics, such as Edmund's cut hair and nails, they are often taken away from the saint and housed in a different location where they become a miraculous artefact in their own right. Oswald's fragmented relics demonstrated that there was no post-mortem interference from the saint that suggested his mind was still involved with his relics. Are saints equally disengaged from contact relics? Do the saints still extend their claim on, or perform miracles through contact relics, or do these function on their own and preserve its own integrity when threatened? I aim to provide an answer to these questions by considering the St Cuthbert Gospel, the Brussels Cross and the Utoxxeter Casket; the first

[78] Smith, p. 76.

being an item used by the saint during his life, which was believed to function as a contact relic after, and the latter are both reliquaries. I argue that descriptions of miracles and certain behaviour of these contact relics indicates that they are neither fully connected to the saint, nor can they function in the same way on their own.

At the translation of St Cuthbert's body in 1104, a Gospel book in a satchel was found in his belongings, according to the account of early twelfth-century monk Symeon of Durham.[79] This Gospel, now referred to as the St Cuthbert Gospel or Stoneyhurst Gospel, is considered to have some qualities of its own: according to twelfth century author John of Salisbury, Cuthbert used it to cure a man during his life by laying it on him.[80] Curiously, while, according to his hagiographers, Cuthbert was very capable of healing people by himself, he decided to use the book as an instrument. The reasons for this are unclear: perhaps he considered the Gospel to have healing powers of its own, or he could have used it symbolically, demonstrating that his own miraculous abilities came through his religion. The St Cuthbert Gospel was after its exhumation perceived and used as a contact relic: receiving its powers through its relationship with the saint. However, unlike other relics, the gospel intersect the boundaries between objects and relics and contributes elements that do not belong to the saint. Like other inscribed objects, it has a voice and its messages can be read, but for it to function as an object of miraculous healing, only touch seems to be required, and even the proximity of objects associated with the book can suffice. Dominic Marner suggests that the veneration of the book and even of the satchel that covered it come from the 'practise of using the text as a talisman'.[81] He relates an incident from Reginald of Durham's twelfth century account, where a monk attempts to take a thread of the satchel, becomes ill and is forced to confess and make restitution to Cuthbert, 'thereby testifying both to the power of the book and the displeasure of the saint'.[82] The satchel appears to function as a contact relic in itself, or, as it contained the Gospel, perhaps functions in the same way as a reliquary that contains a relic: protecting it, yet expanding its range. Its disintegration is conceived as a problem and therefore, the book or its owner, mirrors a desire for the Gospel's wholeness,

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[79] Dominic Marner, *St Cuthbert, his Life and Cult in Medieval Durham* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), p. 22., *The St Cuthbert Gospel*, early eighth century, London, The British Library, Add. MS 89000. <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=add_ms_89000> [accessed 12 February 2021].
[80] Mynors, R. A. B., 'The Stonyhurst Gospel: Textual Description and History of the Manuscript', in *The Relics of St. Cuthbert*, ed. by C. F. Battiscombe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 356-74 (p. 358). 'The St Cuthbert Gospel', Appendix, Figure 5.
[81] Marner, p. 22.
[82] Ibid., James Raine, 'Reginaldi monachi dunelmensis *Libellus de admirandis beati Cuthberti Virtutibus Quae Novellis Patratae Sunt Temporibus'* (London: Surtees Society, 1835).

just as we have seen required for the bodies of saints. The apology that follows is directed to the saint, not to the book, suggesting that Cuthbert was responsible for the judgement as well as the Gospel's preservation. In contrast with other objects, this contact relic depends for its perception on its relation to the saint, yet the usage of the Gospel and the stealing of the thread from its container indicate the belief that the object itself had some form of agency, or ability to perform miracles.

Many contact relics are associated with saints, but an example of a particularly coveted type of contact relic that is not, are the remainders of the cross that Christ died on. This contact relic has been the focal point in early medieval English texts such as *Elena*, which survives in the tenth century Vercelli Book, depicting Emperor Constantine's mother Helen, who claimed to have discovered the remains of the holy cross. Other perspectives, such as the *Dream of the Rood*, where the rood itself narrates the story of Christ's crucifixion, also shed light on the importance of the holy cross as contact relic. It is thought that the Brussels Cross, an eleventh century reliquary, may have held a fragment of it.[83] The Brussels Cross, like several of the objects I studied in Chapter 4, contains an inscription from which the object speaks to us:

> Rod is min nama geo ic ricne cyning bær byfigynde blode bestemed þas rode het Æþlmær wyrcian 7 Aþelwold hys beroþor criste to lofe for Ælfrices savle hyra beroþor.[84]
>
> Rood is my name; I trembled when I carried the royal king covered with blood. Aeþelmaer ordered this cross to be made, and Aþelwold his brother, for the love of Christ, for the soul of their brother Ælfric.

I have already briefly discussed the initial statement this cross contains in Chapter 4, alongside other objects on which similar messages demand attention to their apparent self-awareness. The voice of the true cross, which the object presumably contained, is represented in the first person in the first sentence. This emphasises the way in which the reliquary embodies the whole cross. Although the Cross is considered to be a contact relic, the person it was in contact with was Christ himself, and notably the rood does not take on his agency or authority, but maintains attention on itself.[85] Only a splinter of the relic may have been

[83] Karkov, p. 159., 'Brussels Reliquary Cross', Appendix, Figure 6., *The Brussels Reliquary Cross*, The Cathedral of St Michael and St Gudule.
[84] This inscription is in capitals but I present the text in lower case for clarity.
[85] A possible reason for this is the importance attached to the rood itself by Carolingian rulers. See Smith, p. 83.

contained but, in compliance with Smith's explanation of fragmented body parts, we are encouraged to think of the reliquary as substituting the rest of the rood. Curiously, the second phrase counters this image, by focusing on the origin of the reliquary cross itself from a seemingly external perspective. A second message, inscribed on the back of the cross reads 'Drahmal me worhte', or 'Drahmal made me', emphasises the constructed nature of this object. The Brussels Cross is by no means the only early medieval object inscribed with a message about its commission and manufacturing: the Alfred Jewel, for example, tells us that King Alfred commissioned it, and a tenth- century seax blade is inscribed with the name of its maker or owner, Beagnoþ.[86] However, the Brussels Cross stands out in its function as reliquary. Although its inscriptions acknowledge its constructed nature, it also requests attention for its role in the crucifixion, referring to its past, rather than its present function. While it preserves a sense of wholeness by embodying the relic's original shape, and a type of selfhood or self-reflective ability in describing its identity, its messages cause it to be perceived differently from other relics I just discussed, which claim to be engaged in the present. The significance of the messages on the Brussels Cross lie in the chronicled role of its relic, but we are not given an indication that the relic itself maintains its miraculous abilities and that it remains active. The Brussels Cross, though it proclaims itself to *be* the contact relic, depends for its functioning and for the accuracy of its vocal message on what it contains and it is therefore different from bodily relics, as well as from other types of objects, which I discussed in Chapter 4.

A final example of a reliquary, which equally connects ideas of expansion and embodiment of relics with an individual identity and narrative, is the eleventh-century Uttoxeter Casket, which is generally considered to be a reliquary by scholarship.[87] This wooden casket contains carvings of Christ's life and crucifixion on the front of its exterior. It shows detailed scenes of his ascension on the back, resembling the Franks Casket, which I discussed in the previous chapter, and resonating interpretations of renewed life. As I have shown, the Franks Casket emphasises how its own whalebone materiality reflects its previous life, maintaining some of its individual characteristics and traces of cognition, whilst being transformed into an object with a new function. The resemblance with the Uttoxeter Casket

[86] *The Alfred Jewel*, AD 871–899, Gold, enamel and rock crystal, The Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, Accession No. 1836 p. 135 371. <https://www.ashmolean.org/alfred-jewel#/> [accessed 10 June 2021]., *Seax*, tenth century, iron, London, The British Museum. Museum number 1857,0623.1, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1857-0623-1> [accessed 10 June 2021].
[87] 'Uttoxeter Casket', Appendix, Figure 7., *Wooden Casket: Scenes from the Life of Christ*, C. 1050, Cleveland Museum of Art <url=https://clevelandart.org/art/1953.362> [accessed 17 May 2021]., Karkov, p. 86.

and its emphasis on life after death, increases the possibility that the Franks Casket was also used as a reliquary. Both may have contained small relics, shielding them and simultaneously increasing their material presence whilst extending messages of physical transformation. The central place and emphasis of the carvings on the Uttoxeter Casket is on Christ's triumphant resurrection and afterlife. This suggests that the casket is perhaps not intended to provide relics with a peaceful resting place: instead it demonstrates expectations of activity in death. Although the Uttoxeter casket does not share the Franks Casket's metamorphosis from animal to object, it is made of living material, recalling the rood and its own transformation. Reliquaries such as these support the notion that (contact) relics had the potential to retain some of their life and to remain active post-mortem. Nonetheless, the caskets maintain a certain distance from their content: these reliquaries are not personalised, and there is far more emphasis on Christ, or even on the whale, than on what they may have contained. Compared to the Brussels Cross, which participates in the identity of its relic, the caskets display their own material identities, without providing a 'voice' for their relics and thus without granting those a discernible cognitive process.

It is difficult to unearth uses and beliefs surrounding contact relics and reliquaries in early medieval England. While there is plenty of reason to understand the general scholarly and early medieval insistence that a small part represents the whole of a saint, when we study contact relics, there is also clear evidence that these maintain their own properties, as both the St Cuthbert Gospel and the fragment of the cross do. There is a connection between Cuthbert and his gospel, and after his death he interferes to protect it. The Cuthbert Gospel is, as all gospels are, inscribed with the word of God, but gives us no indication of a sense of self. It is an instrument applied by Cuthbert, before and after his death. Yet, it has simultaneously been suggested that the gospel has properties of healing. Even materials that have been in contact with the gospel become the object of desire for Cuthbert's devotees and it seems the gospel does not solely depend on the saint for its abilities. In contrast, the contact relic in the Brussels Cross seems to be part of a whole, with a unitary identity presented by the reliquary. The Brussels Cross mimics the holy cross, but not Christ, from whom the contact relic acquires its potential for miracles. Contact relics and reliquaries appear to exist at the intersection of relics and objects. Like the objects examined in the previous chapter, they request attention for their identity, if not self-awareness, and they do not claim to essentially *be* the saint or god they originate from, but they ultimately depend on them for their claim to glory to be valid. Looking at the Brussels Cross, we see that voice again determines several facets of the object's identity, and indicates that there is mental awareness present. While the

same has already been said about the Franks Casket, despite its similarities, the Uttoxeter Casket does not express an individual message or 'voice', nor does it refer to its content. Objects such as contact relics and reliquaries thus do indeed influence perception of what they may have contained, but they are not part of it.

Conclusion

The narratives and objects considered in this chapter give us evidence of assumptions about activity of minds in texts that are not explicitly theorising about the mind, and which should be taken into account in order to fully understand the ways in which minds were perceived in early medieval England. Scholarship has shown that, from the very start of the early medieval period, ideas that the saint was somehow present in their relics and was active are evident. Nonetheless, the main focus of scholarly discussion has been on the connection of relics with God as the driving factor behind the saint's presence and miraculous powers. The examples I have given in this chapter demonstrate that, according to texts from early medieval England, the connection between body and mind often continues to exist when a saint has died. Some of the saints participate in giving judgement and punishment after their deaths. Unlike we see in the sources that address disarticulated bodies, their hagiographers refer to them by name, and thereby imply that it is the saint, not God, who is responsible for an action or miracle. I have confirmed that certain properties belonging, or related to concepts of the mind were described to survive at the site of the saints' bodies, and this indicates the presence of a belief that the saints were indeed capable of personally exerting influence. The principal place of the soul in hagiographical literature is not replaced by these findings, but the sharp divide between the mind as either a corporeal or incorporeal substance needs to be reconsidered. While it is difficult to understand to what extent ideas of the mind as corporeal entity are of influence for the beliefs about relics, it does become clear that it is considered of vital importance, especially by the saints themselves, that their bodies are kept intact. Their involvement indicates that the intactness of the body is related to the functioning of the mind, and we see far less personal interference from saints whose bodies are disarticulated, or from contact relics.

There is particular emphasis, in the sources included in this chapter, on the importance of having an incorrupt or fully articulated relic. Some of the saints I discussed appear to remain markedly egocentric, focussed on their physical remains and responding to personal insults and to the way their bodies are handled, as if they retain the same ability to experience what happens to them, and the same agency to influence this. The body is

recognised in other types of primary literature, such as the poem *Soul and Body II*, as the site for a deceased person's mental activity, and the central position of the body as something to be addressed by devotees is emphasised in hagiographical literature. Much of the discourse around the dead bodies of saints specifically indicates the importance of intactness, and an aversion to disarticulation. Saints, such as Alchmund and Edmund, perform post-mortem miracles to communicate their desire to remain, or become, one complete relic, suggesting to us that the saint is mentally aware at the site of their body. While deceased saints might simply be displeased to see their bodies disassembled, it seems that intactness of the body plays a role in the functioning of the saint's mind. That is to say, the saints I have concentrated on in this chapter who have the most complete relics also appear to be more active and more personally engaged with their body and their body's material surroundings. This conclusion prompts questions about the continuation of mental awareness and the role of the body. A possible explanation is that the body is considered to contain the physical mind, which remains active when the body remains intact. It is not only the state of their bodies that the dead saints have knowledge of: they also interfere when objects in the environment of their bodies are stolen, demonstrating an extended interest in their belongings. Saints such as Margaret and Oswald, whose relics are disarticulated, are significantly less involved with the miracles that occur after their deaths. Margaret is said to reside only in heaven and Oswald's relics are referred to as objects, while attention to the saint's identity diminishes. The examination of a contact relic —Cuthbert's Gospel Book— indicated that there was a perceived connection between the object and the saint, as well as the book's individual ability to perform miracles. The Brussels Cross contrastingly expressed notions on its own production and identity, as well as its connection with and embodiment of the contact relic it held. There is thus a significant difference between these types of reliquary and contact relic: they show us that different perceptions existed on what it was that survived death and produced miracles.

The hagiographical sources included in this chapter incorporate significant information about the type of relics involved: namely, fully articulated bodies, disarticulated bodies or contact relics. These details often relate directly to the described agency and functioning of those relics. The hagiographers who refer to a saint's remains as the saint in question, the descriptions of living and dead saints' determination to keep their bodies intact after death, and the notable difference between descriptions of those saints' miracles and the miracles of disarticulated relics, all convey the impression that the saint's mind remains connected and engaged after death as long as the body remains intact. The preference for

fully articulated relics and the frequently conceiled condition of disarticulated ones can be explained by considering the relationship between notions of corporeal minds and the bodies of saints, which affect a relic's potency. This realisation allows us to consider that continuation of cognitive functioning may be an important factor in the described behaviour of the relics of saints.

Conclusion

The most important aim of this research project was to collect and examine a large amount of information on minds in early medieval England in order to determine how minds were perceived by people during this period. Simultaneously offering different readings and new perspectives on minds and their functioning, whilst consolidating these findings with existing scholarly knowledge on the mind, has proven to be a challenging undertaking. This project aimed to reveal and analyse the wealth of descriptions of minds that are present in early medieval English culture and to hereby expand the present-day models and paradigms that provide a foundation for this type of research. However, instead of offering a simplified or integrated collection of ideas, I have given my readers a wide variety of ambiguous and inconclusive findings to process. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the key findings of this research project show that early medieval people considered their minds not to be uniform or consistent, but rather to be diverse, changing and contingent on circumstance and environment. The descriptions of minds from this period do not adhere to just one or two dominant philosophies of mind. This means that an attempt to categorise them according to their adherence to traditions or their specific features would involve simplifying these findings or interpreting their meaning in one specific way, thereby neglecting other potential readings. Secondly, while I initially intended to extend present-day scholarly models of the mind in order to accommodate a broader range of descriptions and to give a systematic overview of the early medieval mind, I found that these models are too limited or inflexible to be used for this purpose. Thus, both the findings from primary source material and the framework that was to be used as a foundation revealed themselves to be different than anticipated upon closer examination, and this stimulated the usage of a new methodology through which I uncovered descriptions of diversity.

The finding of complex and sophisticated source material and the discovery of limitations of present-day scholarly models are the result of the methodologies selected. I decided to take a revisionist approach for this project, led by the primary sources and with the aim to accept variation in descriptions of early medieval minds and their behaviour. This approach helped to shed light on different potential interpretations of descriptions of minds in well-known source texts on minds, and to introduce materials that have not been considered relevant in this field before, especially with regards to concepts of non-human minds, minds described to be outside the human body and minds said to that exist after death. This project has exposed a large quantity of early medieval descriptions of diverse minds and I have

suggested a range of different ways to interpret these. I will now evaluate the most important findings of this project and their potential impact for our understanding of concepts of minds in early medieval England.

One of the first paths of inquiry concerned the concepts of mind that exist in modern society, and in Chapter 1, I questioned whether and how these can be used in comparison to early medieval concepts of minds. I argued that many problems are rooted in uncertain and unstable modern definitions of mind, which make it difficult to draw parallels to medieval ideas. A perceived model of the standard mind that behaves according to the criteria set out by the philosophical traditions that it is part of, is centralised in prominent scholarly research. On the other hand, there are also separate studies that concentrate only on what is explicitly described as the abnormal or unhealthy mind. As a method of comparing modern and medieval ideas on the mind, and behaviour of the mind, some scholars prefer to use data from modern medicine, biology, and particularly neuroscience. This field offers a language that allows detailed examinations of medieval descriptions of minds and of symptoms of presumed illness. As a consequence, early medieval descriptions of mind are often viewed through the lens of modern concepts of normativity or health, at the risk of losing or adding a range of potential associations. While it may be possible to compare medieval and modern concepts of minds, our modern knowledge of medicine is fundamentally different from many early medieval ideas of health and illness. The diversity of human understanding, perspective and experience over centuries is even evident within the early medieval period. Because the purpose of this research project is to gain understanding of concepts of mind from early medieval England, I have decided not to apply modern medical terminology to translate or discuss descriptions from the past. The approaches taken in this project have allowed me to amend earlier misrepresentations and to consider different interpretations going forward.

The primary literature depicts minds as diverse and changing. It has become clear that Latin and Old English texts often adhere to more than one philosophical tradition of mind, and occasionally there are even contradictions in the way minds are portrayed within the same text. Alcuin of York's work exemplifies that, while it was influenced by both Isidore and Augustine, their contrasting views were not considered in need of consolidation, and several concepts of mind were present in the same text. Further, close reading of Old English texts such as *Maxims I* confirms that the lexicon denoting mind is highly complex and causes difficulties for scholarly choices in translation:

> gif þu me þinne hygecræft hylest ond þine heortan geþohtas.
> Gleawe men sceolon gieddum wrixlan.[1]
>
> if you hide your *hygecræft*[2] and your *heortan*[3] thoughts from me.
> Wise men shall exchange maxims.

Compound nouns such as *hygecræft,* and the suggestion that thoughts derive from the *heorte,* lead to the conclusion that not only the language, but also early medieval concepts of mind must be markedly different from present-day concepts. Findings in this chapter show that the Latin and especially the Old English lexicon reflect the diversity and changeability of concepts of mind. This realisation has the potential to contribute to an expanded framework in scholarship, where Latin and vernacular texts on the mind can be reconciled and compared, instead of contrasted, thereby establishing a more complete and nuanced representation of the versatile descriptions of minds in early medieval England.

The research carried out in the first two chapters of this thesis was proposed in response to the scholarly models and paradigms on early medieval minds, which I intended to use as a foundation that could be expanded. I expected that existing paradigms could potentially accommodate far more diverse descriptions and accounts based on new findings when I adjusted their parameters. In the second chapter of the thesis, I traced features, such as corporeality and the locus of the mind, of certain traditions that determine scholarly models of the early medieval mind. These traditions, known as the Latin or classical, and the vernacular tradition, do not quite encompass all source descriptions and potential interpretations that can be discovered in primary texts. Furthermore, the patterns established by scholars are not always consistent. This chapter demonstrated that complex and sophisticated ideas, such as the hydraulic model of the mind, divisions of the soul, and the three-part division of the brain, were present in the early medieval period, as well as notions of instability of mind. While some examples clearly contain features of a certain tradition, others are difficult to place. Texts like the prose *Solomon and Saturn* show, for example, the idea that the soul does not appear to be fixed in the body:

> on þrim stowum heo byð; on þam bragene, oððe on þere heortan, oððe on þam blode.[4]

---

[1] 'Maxims I', *The Exeter Book*, pp. 156-57, ll. 1-4.
[2] 'hyge-cræft' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: mental power, intellect, wisdom.
[3] 'heorte' *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*: the heart.
[4] 'Solomon and Saturn 41', *The Prose* Solomon and Saturn, p. 31.

It is in three places; in the brain, or in the heart, or in the blood.

It is difficult to say whether it is corporeal or incorporeal and how it relates to the mind. In a related text, *Adrian and Ritheus*, the mind is,

on þam heafde and gæð ut þurh þone muð.[5]

In the head and it goes out through the mouth.

This raises the same questions as the description of the soul did. The abundance and diversity of the findings in primary source material of this project lead to a different picture of concepts of early medieval minds in England from that described by previous scholars.

It was not my intention to create a new model or paradigm of early medieval minds in this project, but the methods and sources I used have led me to create a new way of examining early medieval English descriptions of minds instead, yielding a wide range of results that can help us come to a more complete understanding of the ideas that existed in this period. Rather than expanding existing models of the mind and working within their restrictive limits, I chose to step away from the search for set patterns and paradigms I studied in Chapter 2, and to instead examine the primary sources without the influence of specific frameworks in the other chapters of this thesis. The outcome of the research conducted thus has been complex; it is not always possible to understand what interpretations were intended in the early medieval sources, whether literal or metaphorical meaning is conveyed, and what information should be prioritised in sources that appear to contradict themselves. In such cases, a model of the mind, or philosophical framework can guide us to certain conclusions about intent. Its absence leads us to accept the possibility that we, at this point, either cannot be sure what an early medieval English author meant to tell us, or that they intentionally allowed there to be multiple interpretations. Rather than searching for unambiguous descriptions of minds that fit with our paradigms or fulfil our prognoses, rejecting such models allows us to acknowledge that early medieval minds are described as plural and changeable.

A large number of early medieval descriptions indicate that minds were considered to be diverse and individual. Nevertheless, textual analysis in the third chapter of this thesis demonstrated that there were also expectations and predictions that early medieval people made of the behaviour of their minds during life. These expectations are particularly based on

[5] 'Adrian and Ritheus', *The Prose* Solomon and Saturn, p. 145.

a person's stage in life, as well as on the training of their minds and influences from their environment and circumstances. The primary texts show an emphasis on training and control of the mind. An instruction on training and education in *Maxims I* ends with the line,

> Styran sceal mon strongum mode,[6]
>
> one must govern with a strong mod;

This demonstrates a need and ability to develop a strong mind. At the same time, there are warnings for undesired development in minds such as Heremod's in *Beowulf*, which caused him to become destructive and in need of care. The description of Heremod's state of mind raises questions about perceptions of normality and of health and sickness in early medieval England. These are recurrent themes; I established that, in adulthood, people were described as susceptible to mental change under the influence of bodily changes, and, in particular the influence of pregnancy. Several descriptions in the primary sources indicated that pregnant women, and the foetuses they carried, had the potential to influence each other's minds, in positive and negative ways. While it was unclear what, exactly, it meant for a woman to become *witleas*, it appeared that this was not a permanent state of mind, and the medical books list recipes to cure it. Similarly, illnesses such as *monoð seoce*, or lunacy, appear in the literature as temporary changes to the mind which can be cured or altered, confirming that environmental and personal circumstances can cause such change. Finally, my analysis of the descriptions of maturity and wisdom in *Beowulf* shows that there are indications that minds continue to develop in old age, but once again, change in circumstances appears to be a greater factor in achieving wisdom and maturity of mind than age. The examples in the third chapter thus illuminate that, in addition to the various theoretical concepts of mind and philosophical traditions that were discussed in the second chapter, much attention was paid in early medieval literature to the behaviour of minds during the various stages of life and the factors that provoked change in a person's mind.

One striking feature of early medieval literary sources is the number of descriptions of minds and mentalities that appear to be non-human or that seem to exist outside of the human body. Some of the texts and objects selected for Chapter 4 have previously been discussed by scholars, but this project is the first to make an explicit connection or comparison between the fields of human and non-human minds. I used 'voice' as an indicator in signalling self-

[6] 'Maxims I' *The Exeter Book*, pp. 156-63, l. 51.

awareness and mental activity outside of the human body. The structure of the fourth chapter was based on the types of mind I distinguished outside of the human body as described in early medieval texts and objects from early medieval England. The first of these, the extended mind, was found in one of the Exeter Book riddles, in which a human mind appeared to be extended into a book, in order to safeguard a cognitive process. A particular feature of the human mind depicted in this riddle, namely instability, appears in several other texts as well and stimulates the mind in its ability to leave its bodily container and travel, as we see in the poem *The Seafarer*. Ideas relating to stability and foundations play an important role in pressuring minds to transpose themselves. While both these minds seemed to be of a human nature, some objects display what appear to be their own cognitive processes and they seek attention for them: 'Hring '[h]ring ic hatt[æ]', or 'I am called ring' is inscribed on one such object, and it seems to have been created with the sole purpose of providing insight into the mental worlds of the non-human. Not only objects, but animals are portrayed to possess mental processes as well, such as depicted in *The Whale* and by the dragon in *Beowulf.* Several of my sources did not fit comfortably in one of these categories, which is why I introduced objects such as the Franks Casket as a hybrid mind; being both object and animal in its representation.

'Voices' often indicate a constructed presence of various types of mind, which sometimes show awareness of identity or the situation they are in, or reveal emotion or wisdom. What they all have in common is that they attempt to provoke thought and engagement from their human audience. However, the connection between minds and voices also led me to establish that 'voice' in the primary sources is often meant to be read very literally: the voices in the 'bookworm' riddle, *The Seafarer* and *Beowulf* described sound rather than image, text, or symbol. The findings in this chapter are significantly different from those in previous chapters, in which I investigated scholarly models and primary source descriptions of human minds. Yet the discovery of constructed types of mind outside of the human body leads to a much broader understanding of the way in which early medieval people in England considered concepts of mind, and of human exceptionalism, whilst providing insight into the mental worlds of the human by reflection of the non-human.

The final part of this thesis is devoted to ideas of minds or a form of mental capacity that survives death, as described in hagiography. This chapter suggests that some of the concepts of mind, and particularly, of preserving a part of the mind or a cognitive process, as found in Chapter 4, were not only applied to non-human objects; the bodies of saints and their contact relics were also viewed as a potential foundation or container for a mind. I argue

in Chapter 5 that early medieval people considered the wholeness of a dead body to be an important factor in its potential ability to retain any mental capacity that manifests itself in the power of the saint to interfere and perform miracles under particular circumstances. My findings in this part of the thesis show that bodies that are incorrupt or at least unfragmented, are more active in producing post-mortem miracles and in interfering with their environment, and that there is far less personal interference described from saints whose bodies are disarticulated. Many of the saints and their followers are concerned with the intactness of their deceased body. This phenomenon is exemplified by St Alchmund's appearance in a dream with the following speech when a bone from his finger had been taken:

> Quid est quod facere voluistis? Putastis membris desectum me in ecclesiam referre, in qua Deo et sancto Andrese apostolo ejus integro corpore et spiritu servivi?[7]
>
> What is it that you meant to do? Do you think that you can carry me, with my members dissected, into the church in which I served God and his apostle Saint Andrew, with my whole body and spirit intact?

Alchmund demonstrates that there was considered to be a link between the mind and the body after death, when the soul is in heaven. Narratives such as Alchmund's suggest not only that the saint is mentally aware at the site of his body, but also that further disarticulation would impede them in their post-mortem service. My selection of hagiographical narratives indicates that the saints who have the most complete relics appear to be more active and more personally engaged with their bodily remains and personal possessions. While theological convention dictated that even a small relic or contact relic should contain the same potential for miracles as a fully articulated body, the contact relics and reliquaries I studied do not seem to behave in the same way as the saints. There are accounts of miracles but there is no personal interference from the saint through the object. Contact relics do not behave as an extension of the saints they are associated with, even though they derive their miraculous potential from their connection to the saint. Yet, like other objects discussed in Chapter 4, they represent themselves and speak with their own 'voice' through textual inscriptions, but these do not necessarily represent the saint they were in contact with. The conclusions drawn from this chapter force us to further expand our understandings of concepts of minds in early

[7] Symeon of Durham, 'Historia Regum §51-52', *Libellus de exordio*, pp. 47-50.

medieval England. Even after death, minds were depicted to endure under very specific circumstances. Corresponding to the behaviour of minds during life, circumstantial changes to the dead saint's bodily environment dramatically affect their personal cognitive involvement and ability for interference.

While the central area of study for this thesis is that of minds in early medieval minds in England, the key findings of this project also have implications for various other fields of study. My first chapter concentrated on the way modern ideas of minds affect our interpretations of medieval material, but also how our understanding of medical issues in the past can influence our general ideas of health and sickness. Reviewing the potential results of drawing direct parallels between modern and medieval discourse on this has encouraged me to limit my usage of modern medical data and theory throughout. The wealth of findings I uncovered do not reflect notions of mental health and illness in the same way as the ones we hold today, and they have the potential to counter ideas of universality of minds, rather than confirm them. Another area affected by my research outcomes is that concerning philosophical notions on dualism and corporeality. This project has shown that there is not as clear a division between beliefs where the mind resided as has previously been argued. Many of my conclusions regarding this rely on the adoption of literal textual interpretations, instead of metaphorical, and on the application of this method in different types of text.

While the behaviour of minds was previously not discussed in present-day research on stages in life in early medieval England, ideas of growth and development of minds in specific phases or situations are manifest in my findings and may bring new insights when incorporated in this area. Furthermore, studies of the early medieval mind have usually been limited to human minds, but my investigation into extended minds and non-human minds, as evidenced by ideas of material voice, connects the spheres of human minds and cognition with the material, and allows us to consider a much broader definition of minds existing in early medieval England than previously recognised. Finally, my examination of hagiography and relics in combination with ideas of minds that continue to exist after death has the potential to develop our understanding of concepts of mind after death and to contribute to traditional notions of the value and substance of relics, contact relics and reliquaries. Ultimately, it is my hope that this thesis furthers our understanding of concepts of minds in early medieval England, and contributes to our knowledge of medieval philosophy, the history of medicine, and the study of objects and relics.

Appendix

Figure 1.

‘Illumination of the brain, liver, heart and testicles’

Cambridge, Gonville and Caius MS 428/428 Folio 50r.

Figure 2.

The ‘Trumpington Cross’

Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, Accession No. 2017.58

Figure 3.

Gilded silver finger-ring found at Wheatley Hill, Durham.

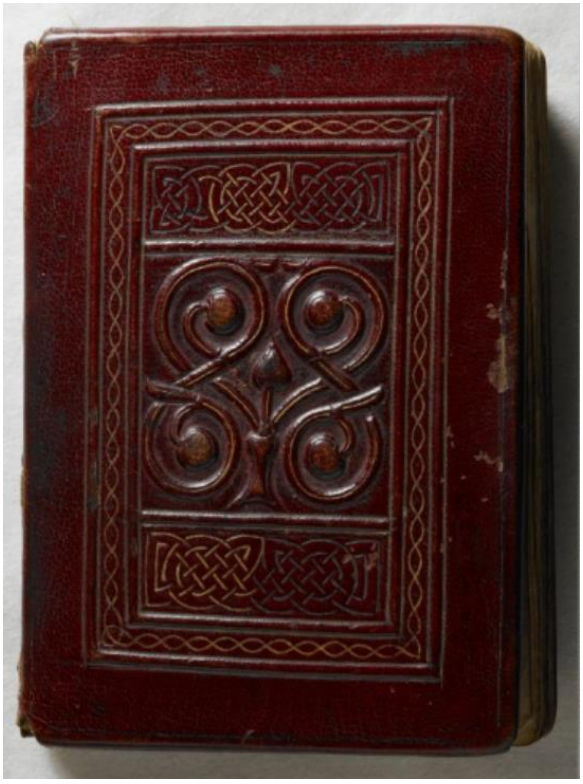
British Museum, Asset Number 103470001

Figure 4.

‘Franks Casket’ or ‘Auzon Casket’. Front Panel.

British Museum, Asset Number 98117001.

Figure 5.



‘The St Cuthbert Gospel’, Front cover leather binding

The British Library, Add. MS 89000

Figure 6.

‘The Brussels Reliquary Cross’, back

The Cathedral of St Michael and St Gudule

Photo by Christopher R. Fee and James Rutkowski, Gettysburg College <http://public.gettysburg.edu/~cfee/MedievalNorthAtlantic/>

Figure 7.

‘Uttoxeter Casket’, or ‘Wooden Casket: Scenes from the Life of Christ’

The Cleveland Museum of Art

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