

For the Love of 'Bad, Foreign Habits':  
Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian Cultural Development and Identity  
Differentiation from 750 to 950 CE

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## Abstract

In this thesis, I will focus on the topic of cultural interactions between Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons during the first half of the “Viking Age” --from approximately 800-950 CE. This period generally corresponds to the “Settlement Period”<sup>1</sup> of 850-950 for this is the era in which Scandinavian raids were increasingly accompanied with Scandinavian settlement within the eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. I will highlight many manifestations of these prolonged cultural interactions present within items of material culture dated between the eighth and tenth centuries. Through the presentation of these artifacts in conversation with contemporary textual sources, I aim to establish a conceptualization of cultural hybridity that occurred in this period. Moving from a broad overview of this hybridity, I will highlight specifically religious examples of material culture to illustrate the development of a cultural cross-fertilization from social interactions between Anglo-Saxons living in eastern kingdoms with the incoming Scandinavian raiders and later settlers. Then shifting from a primary focus on material objects, this research will then integrate the contemporary textual sources as a means of formalizing conceptions of identity assumption and how that reflects the significance of cultural parameters.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Kershaw, “Culture and Gender in the Danelaw: Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian Brooches,” *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 5 (2009): 295–325.

# Introduction

## **Background and historical context**

The period roughly between the late eighth century to the fourteenth century was an era of expansive Scandinavian exploration, raids, conquest, and settlement in regions far beyond the borders of Northern Europe. Beginning in Anglo-Saxon England, Viking raiding parties traveled as far west as North America and as far east as Constantinople. In the late eighth century, Scandinavian raiding parties landed in England, Ireland, and Scotland looting and pillaging communities. In the mid-ninth century, Scandinavian ships also sailed further south landing in Francia<sup>2</sup> and the Iberian Peninsula, west to Iceland<sup>3</sup>, and east to what are now areas of western Russia<sup>4</sup>. The overall question of the degree of the Scandinavian impact on Europe during the Viking Age is hotly debated; and each region boasts a unique narrative depending on its political and economic climate. The case of England is particularly interesting: not only was it the target of early raids, but also this was the location of what was later referred to as the Danelaw (fig. 1).

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<sup>2</sup> In the early tenth century the Scandinavian leader Rollo was given the position of the Duchy of Normandy by Charles the Simple in an attempt to stop the Scandinavian incursions on this region. In the mid-ninth century.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Parker, *The Northmen's Fury: A History of the Viking World* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2014), 147–50. Large settlements in Iceland during the ninth and tenth centuries are reflected in the later family sagas as having a lasting impact on the region

<sup>4</sup> In western Russia, the Scandinavian establishment of Novgorod and the control over trade in areas of the Volga river strengthened their ability to colonize the region and remain a lasting settlement.



Fig. 1<sup>5</sup>  
Map of the Danelaw

The Danelaw -although not a formally defined area- at its height comprised roughly half of modern day England. The Danelaw was an area of recognized Scandinavian rule following Danish law<sup>6</sup>, and it was within this region that many examples of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian influences converged to produce examples of hybrid culture. These examples demonstrate the complexities of identity expression in a unique period that some argue paralleled the formation of a proto-English identity.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, by focusing on the existence of a diverse range of regional identities, the narrative of the Viking Age in England is further nuanced in a manner

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<sup>5</sup> Map of the Danelaw. Accessed March 22, 2018.

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/assemblage/html/5/turner.html>

<sup>6</sup> Dawn M. Hadley, *The Northern Danelaw Its Social Structure, c. 800-1100* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000), 2.

<sup>7</sup> Ryan Lavelle and Simon Roffey, *Danes in Wessex: The Scandinavian Impact on Southern England, c. 800 - c. 1100* (Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2015), 13.

that highlights the difficulties in researching this topic and the intriguing complexities of this period.

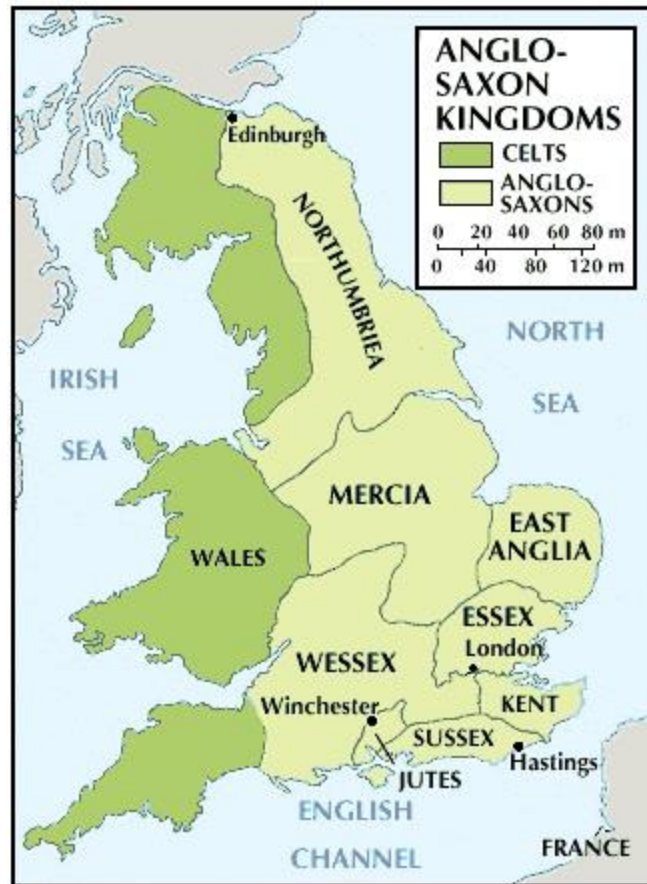


Fig .2<sup>8</sup>  
Early medieval map of England.

By the late eighth century, Anglo-Saxon England was politically divided into approximately seven prominent regions: Wessex, Sussex, Essex, Kent, East Anglia, Mercia, and Northumbria (fig. 2). Just prior to the start of the Viking Age, the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia was a major political force. Located to the west of East Anglia and north of Wessex, this kingdom under the rule of King Offa in the late eighth century annexed neighboring East Anglia. However, this hold did not last, for in the early ninth century East Anglian forces regained their

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<sup>8</sup> Early medieval map of England. <http://madefrom.com/history/medieval/dark-ages/kingdoms-early-medieval-britain/>

autonomy under the leadership of Aethelstan. This strained political relationship between Mercia and East Anglia was not the only instance of political annexation. In this same period of the late eighth and early ninth centuries, the kingdom of Wessex increased its control Essex and Sussex under King Egbert. In the mid-to late ninth century, King Alfred ruled over Wessex until his death in 899 and then he was succeeded by his son Edward the Elder (r. 899-924). Following Edward the Elder's reign, his son Aethelstan assumed the kingship and reigned until 939. While Wessex was the site of many Scandinavian raids, by the end of the tenth century it was the only one of the eighth-century kingdoms that was not directly under Scandinavian rule.

Along with the secular tensions of this period, Christianity is an important aspect of Anglo-Saxon England. However, in the ninth century, the line between a secular political allegiance and religious piety was not always discernible. The spread of Christianity in early medieval England closely associated with royal power and began to spread and take formal ecclesiastical roots in the seventh century as the first Anglo-Saxon bishops were consecrated. One of the most prominent bishops of the early period was Cuthbert (c. 634- 687), who was educated at the Northumbrian royal monastic foundation of Lindisfarne. Most notably associated with Durham, Northumbria and the Holy Island, Cuthbert achieved sainthood after his death and shortly thereafter followed the development of the Cult of St. Cuthbert. Durham and Lindisfarne, Holy Island are two examples out of many of venerated religious centers throughout Anglo-Saxon England at the beginning of our period. At the same time, major towns across England such as York, Winchester, and London were locations of large dioceses centered around prominent cathedrals. In the first half of the Viking Age in England, the relationship between political and religious power is emphasized in contemporary sources such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC)* and *Asser's Life of King Alfred*. As Matthew Innes highlights, "politics and

prayer were combined to deal with the Viking threat.”<sup>9</sup> The interconnected nature of religion and politics is apparent within Alfredian era entries of the *ASC* and develops a strong influence on the text following the death of King Alfred in the end of the ninth century.

Scandinavian fleets and raiding parties in England were not led by a single ethnic group (despite earlier efforts to distinguish between Swedish, Norwegian and Danish groups) but rather was a “co-ordinated enterprise.”<sup>10</sup> The near impossibility of decisively claiming some raiding parties or settlements as essentially Danish or Norwegian for example, illustrates the issue of terminology when trying to group these incoming parties under a single identity. Therefore, in an attempt to not ascribe a specific history to one people bearing the possibility of nationalistic assumptions, in reference to ‘viking’ raiding parties, I will be using the term ‘Scandinavian raiding party’. For while this may on a surface level be a vague classification, it is better to err on the side of caution for these groups may be comprised of a number of different specific Scandinavian cultural identities.<sup>11</sup>

Starting with Lindisfarne in 793, Scandinavian raiders moved throughout the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms periodically through the ninth and tenth centuries. During this same period, The *ASC* attests that Scandinavian parties began temporarily settling in certain areas with the first overwintering having occurred at Sheppy in 855.<sup>12</sup> After this initial temporary settlement, overwintering occurred more frequently as the ninth century progressed. For example, the

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<sup>9</sup> Matthew Innes, *Introduction to Early Medieval Western Europe, 300-900: The Sword, The Plough and the Book* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 374.

<sup>10</sup> N. P. Brooks, “England in the Ninth Century: The Crucible of Defeat,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 29 (1979): 8, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3679110>.

<sup>11</sup> While the term ‘Scandinavian’ may incite an assumption of a cultural hegemony particularly in areas today known as Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, this is not an argument I am trying to make nor do I align with. The use of this term is an attempt to not assign specific events with specific ethnicities, for the contemporary recording of these events often generalized and assumed a cultural hegemony making it difficult to decipher the true ethnic composition of these raiding parties. See Hadley, *The Northern Danelaw 800-1100*, 298-99.

<sup>12</sup> “Winchester Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 66.

Peterborough Manuscript highlights overwintering in East Anglia in 865, settling at York for a year beginning in 869, and overwintering at Torksey, Lincolnshire in 873.<sup>13</sup> While the total number of Scandinavians to settle in the eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms is unknown, scholars have highlighted that raiding fleets comprising of 80-200 ships were commonplace.<sup>14</sup> This figure only refers to raiding fleets; the existence of other possible fleets primarily focused on settlement remains an unknown figure.

The Viking Age in England is typically believed to have lasted from the initial raid in 793 until the Norman invasion of 1066.<sup>15</sup> In the mid eleventh century, England was the target of separate but nearly back-to-back attempts of conquest. From the north, Harald, King of Norway and his military attempted a conquest of the island starting in Northumbria in September 1066. However, this attempt was thwarted shortly thereafter by the then King of England, Harold Godwinson and his army at the Battle of Stamford Bridge. Then less than a month after this English victory, William, Duke of the Normans led an army to Sussex which eventually overtook the English forces ushering in the end of the Viking Age in England.

The on-going interest of outsiders in establishing political claim to all or part of England in the Early Middle Ages brought many new influences to an already composite landscape. In the late ninth century, continued raiding and settlement of Scandinavian raiding parties in the eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria and East Anglia brought an archaeological record of reactionary stone work, hybridized artifacts, and many textual references to Anglo-Scandinavian interactions in the *ASC*. For this thesis, the various types of hybridized material culture will serve

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<sup>13</sup> “Peterborough Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 69-73.

<sup>14</sup> Brooks, “England in the Ninth Century,” 6.

<sup>15</sup> 1066 is a generalized, not a firm end date for this era for, the *Chronicle* includes references to continued Scandinavian interactions in the area around the Humber River in the years immediately following the Norman invasion.

as a foundation to understanding expressions of differing identities in the textual sources. In turn, recorded instances of cultural cross-fertilization in the *ASC* and *Asser's Life of King Alfred* situated within the individual contexts for the texts' production will offer an insight to the ways in which parameters of cultural differentiation were upheld.

I will explore the development of an Anglo-Scandinavian cultural hybridization from the late ninth through the mid-tenth century through manifestations within the material record. From this initial evidence, a more focused illustration of the development of hybridization within the frame of religion will then be contextualized using contemporary texts. With an understanding of the context and norms highlighted by these texts, I will then move to evaluate the rhetoric employed to frame and portray a reaction to specific events detailing interactions between Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians, or even Anglo-Scandinavians. Through highlighted examples of cultural interaction, the portrayal the different cultures involved provide an insight to cultural points of departure, or 'cultural parameters', from which these medieval authors chose to assign identities.

Cultural hybridity, for the purposes of this research, will be defined as the development of the interrelation and mixing of two or more cultures ultimately resulting in the expression of new culture defined by elements of the starting cultures. Brigitta Frello highlights both the benefits and issues of using the term 'hybridity' or 'hybridized' to define elements of culture.<sup>16</sup> Frello notes one important issue in modern usage when looking at globalization and the debate between hybridization and homogenization as terms: she argues that it is necessary to understand that influences are not necessarily unidirectional, nor are the cultural products of interaction

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<sup>16</sup> Birgitta Frello, "Cultural Hybridity," ed. Carol A. Chapelle, *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, 2013, 2, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0297>.

always homogenous.<sup>17</sup> Cultural hybridity is different from concepts such as assimilation, acculturation, or socialization in the sense that it acknowledges diverse modes of interaction and influence, and considers the cultural models that may have been present during the development and use of artifacts. The term hybridity as used in this paper does not carry with it the assumption of one theory over another.

However, given that hybridity can be a very neutral term it is important to not neglect the nature of raiding and the consequent subjugation that may have been imposed on areas of large Scandinavian settlement in the region of the Danelaw. This facet of interaction must not be disregarded just as the agency of Indigenous East Anglians must not be tossed aside. The goal in using the notion of cultural hybridity for this research is to emphasize that neither group - Scandinavians or Anglo-Saxons - in the evidence I propose, accepted or rejected expressions of culture of the other in an indiscriminate and comprehensive manner. Rather there were examples of cross-fertilization within the material record highlighting a development of an Anglo-Scandinavian hybridized expression of identity.

### **Sources and Their Use**

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is a compilation of various manuscripts composed circa 892 CE. Until this period, the manuscripts are regarded as ‘Common Stock’ or emphasizing the same narrative spanning from the Roman invasion of Britain to the reign of King Alfred in the late ninth century c. 892. However, after this period, the individual manuscripts were added to in varying degrees into the twelfth century, and the nature and extent of additions often depended on the location of the specific manuscript. The manuscripts within the ASC were primarily recorded in the West Saxon vernacular, a local dialect of Old English, as well as Latin. While it

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<sup>17</sup> Frello, 2.

is unknown how many original manuscripts were copied, or how many of these were continued, currently seven manuscripts, labeled A-G, survive largely intact.

Manuscript A, also known as the Winchester or Parker Manuscript, is believed to be the oldest surviving ‘manuscript-witness’ of the extant seven.<sup>18</sup> Manuscript G is believed to be a copy of A made early in the eleventh century. Manuscript B, also known as the Abingdon Manuscript, was originally copied in the late tenth century and spans from 60 BCE to 977 CE. Then, in the eleventh century, MS B was in Abingdon, and it is believed that it was used as a reference in the production of Manuscript C during that time.<sup>19</sup> Manuscript D, or the Worcester Manuscript is a document believed to have been copied from a ‘north-county exemplar’ likely from northeastern England.<sup>20</sup> Manuscript E, the Peterborough Manuscript, is a copy from a chronicle housed in the Kentish library around 1116 CE, for it is believed that a fire in the monastery at Peterborough destroyed the original copy. Finally, Manuscript F - the Canterbury Bi-Lingual Epitome - is unique in the fact that it was in part composed in Old English in the late eleventh century. These seven manuscripts along with two other fragmentary exemplars are currently housed at the British Library and the Parker Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. For the purposes of this work, the rhetoric employed in these manuscripts is integral to understanding markers of cultural distinction, or cultural parameters.

*Asser’s Life of King Alfred* is a contemporary account of King Alfred written in the late ninth to early tenth century by a Welsh monk often associated with the Church of St. David’s. Comprised of entries dating from 849 CE describing King Alfred’s genealogy to his death in 899. The introduction to the translation which will be referenced in this research argues that

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<sup>18</sup> Janet M. Batley, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer Ltd, 1986), ix.

<sup>19</sup> Swanton, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, xxiii.

<sup>20</sup> Swanton, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, xxv.

Asser composed this biography at the request of the Wessex court, and the reason for the religious rhetoric of the biography is that it was used as a tool to emphasize King Alfred as the upholder of Christianity.<sup>21</sup> The importance of religion and its intertwined relationship with politics exemplified in this source provides various examples to highlight relationships between incoming Scandinavians and native Anglo-Saxon as expressed through a southern work. The manner in which this southern rhetoric is used to express these relationships then serves as a valuable resource from which to understand important differentiations made between Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians. Within these differentiations assertions of identity onto groups or individuals are not necessarily static and unchanging, but rather, this text along with the Peterborough Manuscript (PM) and Winchester Manuscript (WM) highlight specific examples of a more fluid method of identification.

In conversation with the textual sources, Chapter One of this thesis examines material remains to illustrate the early cultural divide between Wessex and East Anglia as well as the development of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian cultures in the eastern kingdoms of East Anglia and Northumbria from the eighth to the tenth century. As an eighth century production of East Anglia, examples of numerous Ipswich Ware pottery sherds found in eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms is starkly contrasted with the dearth of finds of the same ware from major trading centers in Wessex such as Hamwic. Items dated to the Settlement Period of Viking Age England have also been analyzed in recent scholarship for their relationship to contemporary identity. In this chapter, a discussion of a dual-currency system of monetary exchange and a newly developed East Anglian brooch style highlight the prevalence of hybridized cultural production. The everyday use of such artifacts to claim one mode of cultural interaction over another is an

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<sup>21</sup> L. C. Jane, ed., Asser's Life of King Alfred (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1966), xxiii-xxii.

important factor to consider when arguing that these artifacts as exemplifying hybridization rather than assimilation out of subjugation.

Chapter Two then examines religious stone sculpture and places these artifacts in conversation with relevant entries in the *ASC* and *Asser's Life of King Alfred*. These examples ultimately work to highlight an increasing trend of Scandinavian involvement in Anglo-Saxon Christianity. From the Lindisfarne stone grave marker portraying the early Lindisfarne raid of 793 to the simultaneous commemoration and disparagement of King Eadwig after his death in 959, the centrality of religion as a significant cultural identifier is emphasized in this chapter. While these examples are in no way an exhaustive survey of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian religious interactions, they do work to illustrate a particular development that may have manifested in an Anglo-Scandinavian culture and sense of identity by the mid-tenth century. In this case, I use the term 'Anglo-Scandinavian' to denote a continued level of cultural interaction that developed hybridized qualities manifested in the material culture of the eastern kingdoms.

In Chapter Three, tensions between Wessex and East Anglia initially portrayed through the unequal dispersal of Ipswich Ware pottery provides early evidence for the prolonged differentiating rhetoric between southern authors and eastern Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian communities. The majority of this rhetoric in the late ninth and tenth centuries focused on assessing questions of political loyalty and Christian piety and coincide with Scandinavian settlement in many areas within eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Within this same period, material objects originating from the eastern kingdoms of East Anglia and Northumbria portray aspects of cultural cross-fertilization in the tenth century reflecting notions of an emerging hybridized Anglo-Scandinavian culture. Therefore, in many instances that contemporary texts referenced these eastern kingdoms, I would argue that tenth century the authors manifested

anxieties of allegiance and piety through the depiction divergent cultural identities as a reaction to a growing Anglo-Scandinavian cultural hybridity in eastern communities.

To conclude, I will illustrate the state of these divergent cultural identities in relation to larger overarching anxieties of cultural preservation in the face of formidable political threats, and the effect it may have in creating both ‘self’ and ‘other’. Then to offer a point of comparison, I will highlight the various political forces vying for total authority shortly after the Norman conquest of 1066 focusing on the areas of the Danelaw noted for their tenth century examples of Anglo-Scandinavian hybridization - East Anglia and Northumbria. Through this brief comparison, I hope to emphasize the complex political and social influences on the eastern region of England in the latter half of the Early Middle Ages. Furthermore, by emphasizing the reactions to these influences as largely manifesting in the development of regional hybridized culture, this paper hopes to illustrate the complex social and cultural composition of England on the eve of the Norman conquest, and the problems of reading the conquest of “Normans” as one over a homogenized “Anglo-Saxon” native population.

# Chapter One

## Material Hybridization: Divergence and Convergence

The region of East Anglia is located in eastern England and comprises the lower portion of what came to be called the Danelaw. Prior to the ‘Viking Age’, sites in East Anglia served as important economic centers due to their location on the North Sea coast and proximity to western and northern Europe. In the mid-seventh century, East Anglia had ‘poly-focal’ regional markets, which by the mid-eighth century developed into a large, fairly unified, regional marketplace.<sup>22</sup> For this chapter I will focus particularly on the proliferation and unequal distribution of Ipswich Ware (IW) pottery in the eighth century, as well as numismatic finds, as material indicators of differing identities within Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. These two aspects of early medieval Anglo-Saxon culture ultimately illustrate a disconnect between different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

It is this disconnect that, in the ninth century, facilitated the hybridization of Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon culture in East Anglia as Scandinavian settlement in the area increased. Such hybridization can ultimately be seen in two material ways: first, through the production of brooches in urban towns and in rural areas, and second, through the existence of dual currency system comprising of both Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon methods of monetary exchange. Therefore, by highlighting examples of material culture that were *intentionally* produced, imported, exported, and exchanged, I will argue that there existed pre-Viking Age cultural tensions between the kingdoms of East Anglia and Wessex. These tensions then became the basis for a prolonged rhetoric of cultural differentiation. Then moving into the mid to late ninth and tenth centuries, the examples of Anglo-Scandinavian hybridized material culture

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<sup>22</sup> Robin Fleming, *Britain After Rome: The Fall and Rise 400 to 1070* (London: Penguin Group, 2011), 194. This reference was based on the development attested to the Buttermarket cemetery, which by the mid-8th century was converted into a mint and left evidence of a market site.

became tangible examples of increased cultural interaction between East Anglians and Scandinavians, further separating them culturally from the kingdoms in the west of the island.

### **A Divided England**

Beginning in the early eighth century prior to the first Scandinavian invasions, the extensive manufacturing of IW pottery in East Anglia illustrates East Anglia as a flourishing economic center. The known archaeological dispersal of this pottery, on the other hand, signifies a cultural divide between the eastern kingdoms and the southern kingdom of Wessex. By the end of the eighth century, East Anglia as an entity was subsumed into the jurisdiction of King Offa, the king of Mercia. After nearly three decades of attempted revolts, East Anglian forces under Athelstan regained their 'independence' from a declining Mercian hold. The end of Mercian control in East Anglia and the simultaneous expansion of King Egbert of Wessex's political control in nearby Kent and the southern regions of Essex and Sussex emphasize differing political trajectories of these regional leaders, for while Aethelstan was trying to re-establish East Anglia as an independent kingdom, the king of Wessex was focused on expansion and political submission. It is this complex political context in the eighth and early ninth centuries that we will begin to analyze East Anglian IW pottery as a material example of the existing tension and cultural divide between the southern and eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

Ipswich Ware pottery was an East Anglian regional production that differed in composition from pottery native to Mercia, and from imported sherds found in Wessex.<sup>23</sup> The IW pottery fabric can be categorized as either sandy or gritty and has multiple motif types as well as motif

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<sup>23</sup> Paul Blinkhorn, "No Pots Please, We're Vikings: Pottery in the Southern Danelaw, 850-1000," in *Everyday Life in Viking Age Towns: Social Approaches to Towns in England and Ireland, C. 800-1100*, ed. Dawn M. Hadley and Letty Ten Harkel (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013), 159.

arrangements.<sup>24</sup> The style is often characterized by a thick base and grooved rim and is most frequently found in the shape of simple jars with upright rims in various sizes, as well as in hanging vessels (fig. 3). IW pottery has been excavated in areas that were the sites of differing pottery types in Mercia to the north, and as far south as London, on the southern end of Essex. However, examples of this type of pottery have not been found in Wessex with the exception of one sherd in Hamwic.<sup>25</sup> Predominantly, the southwestern Anglo-Saxon kingdom seems to have preferred an altogether different form of chalk-tempered wares. However, Blinkhorn has highlighted that in the eighth century when IW was produced in East Anglia, the southern kingdom of Wessex was mostly aceramic.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the pottery used in Wessex was not locally produced, but rather it was imported to trading centers from other established production sites, to then be sold and distributed within the kingdom. Located in Southampton in the south of Wessex, Hamwic was one of the most prominent trading centers due to its central location at the end point of an inlet from the English Channel near the River Itchen.

Thus, Hamwic in the eighth century then serves as an illustration of the economic demand of greater Wessex, for the overall importance of this site was driven by its role in facilitating the import of material goods for the surrounding regions. In a report by Andrews, the majority of the sherds excavated in Hamwic were dated from the middle of the eighth century to the middle of the ninth century, the same period in which IW pottery had flourished in East Anglia.<sup>27</sup> However, of the 6,902 sherds of imported wares excavated in Hamwic, there are no

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<sup>24</sup> Paul Blinkhorn, "Stamped Ipswich Ware," *Archaeological, Ipswich 1974-1990 Excavation Archive* (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, 2015, 1993), 6, [http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-1644-1/dissemination/pdf/Reports\\_General/IAS\\_pottery\\_stamped\\_R214.pdf](http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-1644-1/dissemination/pdf/Reports_General/IAS_pottery_stamped_R214.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Blinkhorn, "No Pots Please, We're Vikings: Pottery in the Southern Danelaw, 850-1000," 159.

<sup>26</sup> Blinkhorn, 159.

<sup>27</sup> Peter Andrews, *Southampton Finds, Volume 1: The Coins and Pottery from Hamwic*, vol. 1 (Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1988), 116.

pieces of IW pottery.<sup>28</sup> In an attempt to partially account for the dearth of IW pottery sherds in Hamwic, and in Wessex as a whole, an argument was made for a Wessex resistance to the material culture of eastern kingdoms such as East Anglia during the eighth century.<sup>29</sup> This resistance to IW pottery produced in the eighth and early ninth centuries highlighted by Blinkhorn illustrates not only a rejection of material culture, but it also suggests a larger cultural divide between the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms that existed prior to the beginning of the Scandinavian raids in the late eighth century.



Fig.3<sup>30</sup>  
Examples of Ipswich Ware sherds

### **The Convergence of Culture**

In the eighth century, the popularity of Ipswich Ware in the eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and the resistance to this aspect of East Anglian culture in the southwest kingdom of Wessex highlights a disunion between the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. This disunity and trend toward cultural hybridization, whether it was fostered by rival political agendas or an inherent

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<sup>28</sup> Andrews, 1:79.

<sup>29</sup> Blinkhorn, "No Pots Please, We're Vikings: Pottery in the Southern Danelaw, 850-1000," 159.

<sup>30</sup> Examples of Ipswich Ware sherds. [http://www.spoilheap.co.uk/pot\\_gallery.htm#iw](http://www.spoilheap.co.uk/pot_gallery.htm#iw)

cultural difference, essentially fostered and sustained a rhetoric of cultural differentiation in southern authorship. Focusing on the existence and development of this Anglo-Scandinavian hybridity, I would argue that it was this cultural contact between the Scandinavian raiding parties and the native East Anglians within the context of a site of economic production that fostered the development of a hybridized Anglo-Scandinavian culture.

To illustrate an interpretation of the relationship between East Anglians and the Scandinavian raiders, the 866 entry of the WM highlights that

“in the same year a great-raiding army came to the land of the English and took winter-quarters in East Anglia and were provided with horses there, and they made peace with them.”<sup>31</sup>

Then in another entry for the year 894, this author of the WM describes how

“[w]hen they came to their fortification and to their ships in Essex, the remnant again gathered together a great raiding-army from East Anglia and from Northumbria before winter; and secured their women and their ships and their money in East Anglia”<sup>32</sup>

According to this manuscript between 866 and 894, East Anglia as a Scandinavian settlement developed from a temporary site for over-wintering to a site entrusted to keep Scandinavian wealth and serve as a central settlement for women.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, this development emphasizes that East Anglia was viewed as suitable for Scandinavian settlement, and as a result, became a site for cultural cross-fertilization between the Scandinavians and eastern Anglo-Saxons in the ninth century. Furthermore, because East Anglia was a prominent economic center, the results of this convergence of cultures was manifested within the contemporary material production.

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<sup>31</sup> “Winchester Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 68.

<sup>32</sup> “Winchester Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 88.

<sup>33</sup>Swanton does not reference the specific word that was translated as ‘secured’ for it could imply that this was a region where women were obtained or a region in which they were brought to be protected. I read the latter interpretation, given that we know the ships in this list were Scandinavian.

From the late seventh century, the currency of eastern England centered around silver coinage, while in Scandinavia, regulated weighted silver was the main form of currency.<sup>34</sup> As highlighted by the WM, East Anglia in the mid to late ninth century offers an example of a Scandinavian settlement within an already established Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Therefore, when considering this area as a popular site of material production and economic exchange, the development of a dual-currency system of bullion and coin illustrates a coalescing of Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon approaches to economic exchange. The significance ultimately then lies in the notion that these approaches were both considered to be acceptable forms of payment, rather than the incoming Scandinavians being forced to adhere to Anglo-Saxon coinage, or vice versa, the native Anglo-Saxons being forced to convert to an economy centered around the trading of bullion. It is the amalgamation of the two systems which then exemplifies the hybridization of East Anglian and incoming Scandinavian culture.

Scandinavian weighted silver came in two main forms: ingots (fig. 4) and hack-silver (fig. 5), both of which would have been weighed against a standardized weight. Depending on the scale of the payment, these standardized weights ranged most frequently between 0.75g and 40g.<sup>35</sup> While in England prior to the Viking Age, coins had been a well-established system of currency and continued to be so through the ninth and tenth centuries with over 2500 finds dated between 740 and 880.<sup>36</sup> In the ninth century, silver coinage was standardized and ‘foreign coins’ seem to have been “excluded from circulation.”<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the existence of the dual-currency

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<sup>34</sup> Jane Kershaw, “An Early Medieval Dual-Currency Economy: Bullion and Coin in the Danelaw,” *Antiquity* 91, no. 355 (2017): 174–75.

<sup>35</sup> Kershaw, 180–81.

<sup>36</sup> Kershaw, 175.

<sup>37</sup> Kershaw, 175.

system in late-ninth century East Anglia combining coinage with Scandinavian hack silver and bullion weights is significant.



Fig. 4<sup>38</sup>  
Bullion weights from Torksey c. 870s.

Fig. 5<sup>39</sup>  
Hack silver/gold from Torksey c. 870s.

As Kershaw highlights, these two forms of currency circulated concurrently within the same regions and are seen as especially prevalent in East Anglia.<sup>40</sup> However, unlike previous examples of pottery, economic centers and towns were not the primary locations for this dual-currency system, remains are rather found in the rural areas of East Anglia.<sup>41</sup> In the eighth and ninth centuries, examples of pottery highlighted the tensions between East Anglia and Wessex. Whereas in the ninth century, this rural example of a hybridized system of currency in which both were viewed as legitimate means of payment illustrates that the cultural hybridization of the ninth century was not strictly limited to more densely populated urban centers.

As the existence of a dual-currency system highlights the rural aspect of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural hybridization, brooches found in East Anglia and the greater Danelaw

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<sup>38</sup> Example of bullion weights from Torksey c. 870s.  
[http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/normans/gallery/coin\\_72.htm](http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/normans/gallery/coin_72.htm)

<sup>39</sup> Example of hack silver/gold from Torksey c. 870s.  
[http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/normans/gallery/coin\\_71.htm](http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/normans/gallery/coin_71.htm)

<sup>40</sup> Kershaw, "An Early Medieval Dual-Currency Economy: Bullion and Coin in the Danelaw," 182–83.

<sup>41</sup> Kershaw, 174–83. See also Hadley, "The Winter Camp of the Viking Great Army, AD 872-3, Torksey, Lincolnshire," 2016, 46.

dating from the ninth and early tenth century highlight the role of women in the development and use of Anglo-Scandinavian material culture. Prior to the Scandinavian settlement of the ninth century, brooches were primarily used as dress accessories. Scholars have argued that between the seventh and the ninth century, individual brooch types in many cases were expressive of the ‘worldviews’ of the wearer.<sup>42</sup> Then in the ninth and tenth centuries, brooches more explicitly serve as a vital source to highlight the role of women as consumers and influencers of this changing identity during the late ninth century. Kershaw notes that the presence of numerous different Scandinavian brooch types found in East Anglia, and the greater Danelaw region, suggests that Scandinavian style dress accessories were worn by a considerable number of women during the late ninth and into the mid-tenth century.<sup>43</sup> During this period, the most prevalent Anglo-Saxon brooch style was the flat disc, while the contemporary Scandinavian styles found in the Danelaw fall under five categories: oval, equal-armed, convex, trefoil, and lozenge.<sup>44</sup>

Such diversity of Scandinavian styles found in the Danelaw during late ninth and early tenth century highlights the high degree of Anglo-Saxon interaction with Scandinavian material culture. In East Anglia, this interaction coalesced into the production of an Anglo-Saxon flat disc brooch with stylistically Scandinavian motifs. Focusing on the East Anglian flat disc brooch, ‘Scandinavian motifs’ are ultimately illustrated through the interweaving pattern seen in Figure 6 below. The combination of native Anglo-Saxon manufacturing techniques with stylistically Scandinavian designs within a single brooch highlights the high level of cultural interaction

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<sup>42</sup> Alexandra Knox, “Middle Anglo-Saxon Dress Accessories in Life and Death: Expressions of a Worldview,” in *Dress and Society: Contributions from Archaeology*, ed. Toby F. Martin and Rosie Weetch (Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2017), 114–17.

<sup>43</sup> J. Kershaw, “Culture and Gender in the Danelaw: Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian Brooches,” *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 5 (2009): 296–99.

<sup>44</sup> Kershaw, 297.

during the late ninth and tenth century in East Anglia.<sup>45</sup> The majority of examples of this brooch type were found in East Anglia, ultimately strengthening the notion that this region served as a unique location that facilitated a hybridization of eastern Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian culture.

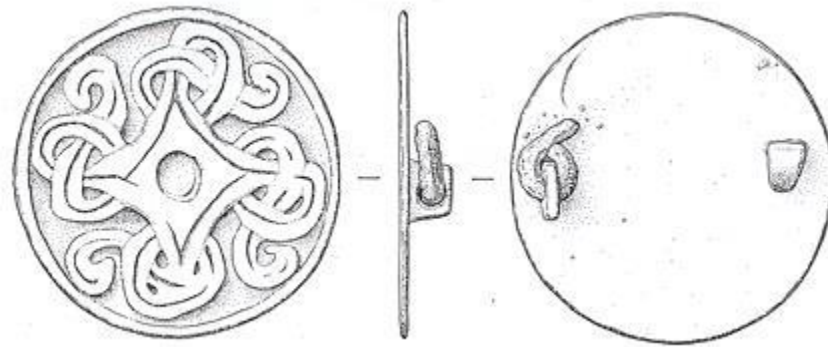


Fig. 6<sup>46</sup>

Drawing of a 10th cent. Borre style disc brooch found in Hilborough (East Anglia).

However, in Kershaw's analysis of the East Anglia disc brooch, she argues that the lack of a 'co-occurrence' of Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon motifs within the same brooch serves as an example of the limited role of metalwork in fostering cultural assimilation or homogenization within the Danelaw.<sup>47</sup> While here Kershaw takes the paucity of examples of thematic integration of native brooch designs from Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian cultures as an argument opposing cultural assimilation, this evidence also speaks to the co-development and hybridization of these two cultures especially by the tenth century. Rather than assimilation, the production of this brooch style with a blend of artistically Scandinavian motif and East Anglian manufacture attests to a blending of available knowledge within a territory recently subjugated to Scandinavian raids, and eventual settlement.

## Conclusion

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<sup>45</sup> Kershaw, 298.

<sup>46</sup> Drawing of a 10th cent. Borre style disc brooch found in Hilborough (East Anglia).  
<http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record?tnf936>

<sup>47</sup> Kershaw, "Culture and Gender in the Danelaw," 302.

Prior to the arrival of the Scandinavian raiding parties, East Anglia was in a unique economic and political relationship with other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. The lack of Ipswich Ware remnants found in Hamwic do not directly correlate to a kingdom-wide boycott of the product, but it does emphasize a prominent disinclination toward a native East Anglian commodity and a larger cultural tension between the kingdoms. This at least partial economic resistance coupled with the East Anglian attempts to stave off political aggrandizement from Mercia and then Wessex then generates a unique cultural climate in East Anglia. This climate facilitated the prolonged differentiating rhetoric employed by western authors in the ninth and tenth century. It is in the period between the eighth and tenth century that East Anglians shifted from trying to reestablish their own self-governance to cohabitating<sup>48</sup> with an unknown number of Scandinavian settlers. Furthermore, the importance of this cultural hybridization represented in the material culture emphasizes the development Anglo-Scandinavian identity in East Anglia by the tenth century.

Alexandra Knox highlights the importance of Anglo-Saxon dress accessories as not only representative of a desired functional design, but also as means of participating in culture.<sup>49</sup> The production and wide use of these hybridized Anglo-Scandinavian brooches reflects tangible manifestations of a culture that developed as Scandinavian raids were accompanied with increasing Scandinavian settlement. Treating material objects as identifiers does not mean that every wearer may have been acutely aware of the implications of the combined styles, however, it does illustrate that at some level, “the intertwining and entangled identities of persons and the

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<sup>48</sup> It is unclear what the specifics of this relationship was whether it was, for this coincides with the development of the Danelaw in the eastern kingdoms.

<sup>49</sup> Knox, “Middle Anglo-Saxon Dress Accessories in Life and Death: Expressions of a Worldview,” 114–16.

things they make, exchange, use and consume.”<sup>50</sup> These examples of hybridized material artifacts ultimately serve as illustrations of a development of an Anglo-Scandinavian identity in the eastern kingdoms by the tenth century.

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<sup>50</sup> Christopher Tilley, “Objectification,” in *Handbook of Material Culture*, ed. Christopher Tilley et al. (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 50.

## Chapter Two

### Religion: Conversion, Coercion, or Acculturation?

In *Britain After Rome*, Robin Fleming highlights the growing Carolingian impact on Scandinavian regions toward the turn of the ninth century. Such impacts include a growing trade network with Christian traders throughout European markets.<sup>51</sup> By the 793 raid of Lindisfarne, Scandinavians thus already had an established history dealing with Christian merchants and authorities. The Scandinavian invasion of the island of Lindisfarne January 8th, 793 was recorded in the PM as

“A great famine immediately followed these signs; and a little after that in the same year on 8 January<sup>52</sup> the raiding of heathen men miserably devastated God’s church in Lindisfarne island by looting and slaughter.”<sup>53</sup>

This event is the first recorded ‘Viking’ attack on east coast of Anglo-Saxon England. The island of Lindisfarne is located just off the northeastern coast between the towns of Norham and Bamburgh. At the time of the raid in the late eighth century, Lindisfarne was a well-established center to the cult of St. Cuthbert, who lived c. 635-687 CE and was made bishop of Lindisfarne in 685, later canonized in 698.<sup>54</sup> Given the prominence and wealth of this island so integrated into the religious history of Britain, it is interesting that the Lindisfarne raid was essentially the first event in what would be a complicated history between incoming Scandinavian raiders and Anglo-Saxon Christianity. For besides a Scandinavian assessment of the economic value of raiding this religious center, the choice of Lindisfarne may also highlight

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<sup>51</sup> Fleming, *Britain After Rome: The Fall and Rise 400 to 1070*, 218.

<sup>52</sup> Swanton highlights a possible scribal error in which the text reads vi id Ianr when it is possible it may have supposed to be vi id Iun (8 June) (1998, 57)

<sup>53</sup> “Peterborough Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 57.

<sup>54</sup> Rosemary Cramp, “The Northumbrian Identity,” in *Northumbria’s Golden Age*, ed. Jane Hawkes and Susan Mills (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing, 1999), 1.

the Scandinavian understanding of the religious significance of the island for English Christians. Therefore, it is possible this attack may have also been an intentional attack on the morale or confidence of all those who held this region in high respect. From a discussion on an early-ninth century grave marker found on the island of Lindisfarne to the portrayal of the baptism of a Scandinavian raiding in the late ninth century, to examples of hybridized religious material culture in the tenth century, the development in expressions of religious cultural interaction highlight the development of an Anglo-Scandinavian cultural hybridization culminating in the tenth century. These examples illustrate one possible Anglo-Scandinavian religious cultural narrative in East Anglia and Northumbria that is not full coercion, nor full conversion. Instead, such a history illustrates a complex process of cultural hybridization that spans multiple generations.

### **Reactions to Lindisfarne**

Given the importance of Lindisfarne in the history of early English Christianity<sup>55</sup>, it is understandable that devout inhabitants of this island present during the Scandinavian raid would recall such an event as an omen of an impending “Judgement Day” or day of reckoning.<sup>56</sup> This sentiment is expressed in the written reactions to the event, but in material terms, it is most clearly illustrated on the ninth century stone sculpture often called the Lindisfarne Stone. Believed to have been crafted as a grave marker, this stone sculpture encapsulates the contemporary view of Christian beliefs and the broader socio-cultural distinctions, at least from a religious perspective, on the Holy Island.

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<sup>55</sup> Although not exhaustive, Lindisfarne is a central location for its connection to St. Cuthbert and the later Cult of St. Cuthbert as well as its association with the Lindisfarne Gospels.

<sup>56</sup> Rosemary Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England*, pt. 1, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 206; Richard N. Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture in Northern England* (London: William Collins Sons & Co, 1980), 162–64.

One face of this stone sculpture (fig. 7) depicts the raid of 793 through seven soldiers wielding swords and axes, while on the other side appears a central cross flanked on each side with an individual bent over in prayer. Above each figure is a hand, in the upper left what appears to be the sun, and finally on the upper right seems to be a crescent-shaped moon. While one side thus seems to be a direct Anglo-Saxon religious representation of incoming Scandinavian raiders, this grave marker is primarily important for its depiction of an early ‘surface level’ religious interaction between the Scandinavian raiders and eastern Anglo-Saxons. In this example, the sculptor essentially conveyed what was most likely a catastrophic event to the community through a relatable and understandable image.

As scholars have interpreted it, the hands at both sides of the stone would represent the hands of God that have come to collect the pious (those praying under the cross) and guide them to heaven. Therefore, given that this sculpture was essentially a grave-marker, Richard N. Bailey astutely highlights such an analysis of this stone as appropriate for its social context, but also for its materialistic function to mark graves.<sup>57</sup> The stone may have meant to be an illustration of the beliefs of whom it was commissioned for or another party who commissioned it for another. Rosemary Cramp highlights her basis for this interpretation by referencing an assessment to Scandinavian raids as “raids as judgement” put forth by Alcuin in response to the Lindisfarne raid.<sup>58</sup> In Alcuin’s own letter on the raid of Lindisfarne, he quotes 1 Peter 4:17 highlighting that “[t]he time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God.”<sup>59</sup> This explicit connection to the Lindisfarne raid as a day of judgement highlights the prominence of this religious perception in prominent Church figures in late eighth century and may then serve to offer a foundation for

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<sup>57</sup> Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture in Northern England*, 162.

<sup>58</sup> Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England*, 1:206.

<sup>59</sup> “letter 12,” Allott, *Alcuin of York, c. A.D. 732 to 804: his life and letters* (York: William Sessions Limited), 19.

understanding the depiction on the Lindisfarne stone. The earliness of this artifact in relation to the beginning of the Scandinavian raids presents an interesting point of departure from which to trace the depiction of raiders by Anglo-Saxons and the Anglo-Scandinavian religious interactions over the next century and a half.



Fig. 7<sup>60</sup>  
Lindisfarne Stone, c. ninth century

### **Baptism of Guthrum**

While the Lindisfarne Stone depicted the incoming Scandinavian raiders as quite literally opposite to Christian faith, less than one hundred years later, the *ASC* and *Asser's Life of King Alfred* highlight a direct Scandinavian interaction with Anglo-Saxon Christianity. In the *Chronicle*, a WM entry for 878 records that in approximately June of that year, King Alfred of Wessex and a Scandinavian raiding party had fought near Edington. That same entry ascribes victory to King Alfred and his forces and claims that

“And one day later [King Alfred] went from those camps to Island Wood, and one [day] later to Edington, and there fought against the whole raiding-army, and put it to flight,

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<sup>60</sup> Lindisfarne Stone, c. ninth century.

[https://naturalhistory.si.edu/vikings/voyage/subset/westernisles/pop\\_history.html](https://naturalhistory.si.edu/vikings/voyage/subset/westernisles/pop_history.html) Accessed March 19, 2018.

and rode after it as far as the fortification, and stayed there 14 days; and then the raiding army granted him prime hostages and great oaths that they would leave his kingdom, and also promised him that their king would receive baptism; and they fulfilled it thus. And 3 weeks later the king Guthrum came to him, one of the most honorable men who were in the raiding-army, at Aller... and there the king received him at baptism.”<sup>61</sup>

Similarly, in Asser, the author documents this event with a more specific eye toward the role of King Alfred during the ceremony highlighting that

“And when he had heard their embassy the king was moved with pity and received from them chosen hostages, as many as he desired; and after they had been received the pagans also swore that they would straight depart from this realm. Moreover Guthrum, their king, in addition promised that he would accept Christianity and would receive baptism at the hand of King Alfred...and king Alfred received him as his son by adoption and raised him from the holy font of baptism.”<sup>62</sup>

Both of these sources highlight the impetus for Guthrum’s baptism was a military defeat and a Scandinavian attempt to recover their soldiers who were taken as hostages. Therefore, while this is an example of a prominent Scandinavian leader interacting with Christianity, it is difficult to fully assess the grounds for, and longevity of, this ‘conversion’. Was the participation in this baptism strictly for secular benefit? Was this interaction a way for both parties to establish an authority through common understanding of the importance of baptism to a predominantly Anglo-Saxon society?

‘Communication of Authority’ is a term used by David Pratt when analyzing the Carolingian, Francian, and English legal traditions in the tenth century, yet this concept is well-suited to emphasize both the desire of King Alfred to baptize Guthrum and the willingness of

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<sup>61</sup> “Winchester Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 76.

<sup>62</sup> L. C. Jane, ed., *Asser's Life of King Alfred* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1966), 43.

Guthrum to be baptized in the late ninth century.<sup>63</sup> In the example of the baptism, while both sources highlighted above were written with a pro-Wessex bias, by looking past the rhetoric and focusing on the situation itself it becomes a clearer depiction of the political benefits that arise from participating in neighboring cultural practices. In this case, it is the respective benefits of giving and receiving baptism in Christian Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. In Asser's depiction of this event, Alfred performs the baptism himself and in doing so is said to have become Guthrum's adoptive father. For King Alfred, using this ceremony to seemingly absorb the image of a Scandinavian leader could have been an effort to establish a pro-Wessex political lineage in the eastern kingdoms. By communicating his authority in this way, King Alfred may have been responding to a growing number of Scandinavian communities in Anglo-Saxon kingdoms such as East Anglia and Northumbria. In turn, this communication of authority legitimates Guthrum's control of East Anglia, for after the baptism he is portrayed in relation to King Alfred. This legitimates Guthrum because he is now described as a cultural insider. This event and its implications then would have facilitated the creation of the later treaty between the two leaders, for Guthrum was a legitimate leader after the baptism by King Alfred.<sup>64</sup>

### **Middleton Cross**

The reactionary nature of the Lindisfarne stone and the rhetoric employed in Asser's description of the baptism of Guthrum highlight the early challenges in establishing the starting point in the development of a hybridized Anglo-Scandinavian culture, for both examples are contentious in their underlying meanings. These examples illustrate the interest in and use of religion in Anglo-Saxon society and the possible ways religion was used to express identity. For

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<sup>63</sup> David Pratt, "Written Law and the Communication of Authority in Tenth-Century England." In *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honor of Wilhelm Levison (1876-1947)*, ed. David Rollason, Conrad Leyser, and Hannah Williams (Belgium: Brepols, 2010), 331-350.

<sup>64</sup> The Alfred-Guthrum Treaty c. 890.

when these examples are placed in chronological relation to one-another, they then seem to highlight particular representations of an increasingly hybridized culture. Moving now to the tenth century, the production of the Middleton Cross essentially furthers this timeline.

According to Richard N. Bailey, with the exception of Gotland, Sweden, pre-Viking Age Scandinavia did not have a tradition of stone sculpture.<sup>65</sup> However, artistically Scandinavian themes have been attributed to artifacts dated to Viking-Age England. One such artifact is the Middleton cross (Cross B) in Northumbria (fig. 8). This cross has a mostly intact shaft with slight deterioration of the arms of the head. Using Rosemary Cramp's system of classification, this cross is of the angular variety with a rectangular style shaft with a circle style arm pit and wedge arm terminal with an (a) type ring.<sup>66</sup> Depicted on the front of the shaft is a 'pagan' warrior with weapons, while the reverse has what seems to be an almost serpent-like zoomorphic design.

These stylistically Scandinavian images, and the images of warriors carved into an established Anglo-Saxon medium emphasize not an exhaustive cultural assimilation between the Scandinavian settlers and the native Anglo-Saxon culture, but like the example of the East Anglian brooch style in the previous chapter, this cross emphasizes a hybridization of Scandinavian motif and Anglo-Saxon manufacture. The original individual or group to commission this sculpture is unknown, however, the purposeful production of this sculpture essentially could be for a natively Anglo-Saxon, a Scandinavian, or a developing Anglo-Scandinavian audience. While there is a case to be made for each argument, the hybridization of Scandinavian motif and Anglo-Saxon stone sculptural technique illustrates the interplay between native and Scandinavian cultural products and motifs.

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<sup>65</sup> Bailey, 76.

<sup>66</sup> Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England*, xv-xvii.

However, rather than viewing it as an example of Anglo-Scandinavian hybridization, James T. Lang argues that Cross B is essentially an example of a “stylistic imposition of a native [Anglo-Saxon] tradition.”<sup>67</sup> Here Lang argues that the sculptural styles illustrated in Cross B can essentially be traced to insular English origins, and therefore this artifact is not an example of hybridization.<sup>68</sup> Yet, Richard Bailey argues that the zoomorphic design as well as the inscribed warrior on the Middleton Cross are examples of the Jelling art style.<sup>69</sup> Bailey substantiates this claim by highlighting that along with its Jelling style, flecks of red paint found on the Middleton Cross - a primer for further coloration - place the object within a timeline of Scandinavian sculpture dating around the tenth century.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, if this cross was commissioned by a Scandinavian settled in the region, the inclusion of these designs on an traditional item of Anglo-Saxon manufacture in tenth-century Northumbria emphasizes the increased development of cultural hybridization. Placed along the same chronology of the previous examples of the baptism of Guthrum and the Lindisfarne stone, the Middleton cross further indicates the notion that in areas such as Northumbria and East Anglia; Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian culture portrayed instances of increasing hybridization into the tenth century.

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<sup>67</sup> James T. Lang, “Continuity and Innovation in Anglo-Scandinavian Sculpture: A Study of the Metropolitan School at York,” in *Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age Sculpture and Its Context: Papers from the Collingwood Symposium on Insular Sculpture from 800 to 1066*, ed. James T. Lang, British Archaeological Reports 49 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1978), 145.

<sup>68</sup> Lang, 145.

<sup>69</sup> Bailey, 63.

<sup>70</sup> Bailey, 26. Although my argumentative focus is the hybridization of cultural identity in eastern England, it is important to highlight that as mentioned previously, pre-Viking Age Scandinavia was largely void of stone sculpture. However, by the tenth century, examples of stone sculpture are found in Jelling (Denmark).



Fig. 8<sup>71</sup>

Two-part image of the front (left) and back (right) of Cross B

### **King Eadwig**

Not only is the material culture illustrative of an Anglo-Scandinavian hybridization in the tenth century, but also during this period the *ASC* highlights a succeeding king's concern about the increasingly hybridized society in the mid-tenth century that had been facilitated by his predecessor. While there are direct references to piety in many entries in the *ASC* that highlight the interwoven nature of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon society, in the mid-tenth century there seems to be an increase in fervency of the religious rhetoric employed.

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<sup>71</sup> Cross B, Middleton Church c. late ninth century or early tenth century  
<http://www.dandebate.dk/dk-images/1309p.jpg>

In a 959 entry in the PM, the author mourns the death of King Eadwig and highlights his peacekeeping abilities, piety, and resolute authority.

“Far and wide he exalted God’s praise and loved God’s law, and improved the people’s security much more than those kings who were before him within the memory of men. And God helped him too, so that kings and earls readily submitted to him.”<sup>72</sup>

However, as the entry continues, the author criticizes King Eadwig. In particular, he was responsible for

“[o]ne ill deed, however, he did too much, in that he loved bad, foreign habits, and brought heathen customs too fast into this land and attracted the alien here, and introduced a damaging people to this country. But God grant him that his good deeds may be greater than his ill deeds, to shield his soul on the longsome journey.”<sup>73</sup>

This entry is a two-part commentary on the cultural expectations of tenth century Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to the east and how they differ from those of Wessex. For not only does this entry illustrate the growing knowledge, and concern, within southern Anglo-Saxon regions that there is a trend toward cultural hybridization occurring in areas such as Mercia and Northumbria, but also that measures seem to have been taken in Wessex to further coexistence, continuing the trend from Alfred’s reign. One aspect of this entry is that at this time it is understood that Anglo-Saxon leaders had an integral role in the process of cultural hybridization. This entry continued a prominent rhetoric employed in the *ASC* when it denounced King Eadwig’s acceptance of “heathens” and their “foreign habits,” however in conjunction with the concern for an Anglo-Scandinavian cultural hybridization, the rhetorical dichotomy signals that the southern author maintained a strict sense of a ‘true’ and acceptable Anglo-Saxon culture which authorities should not waver from asserting. This entry is both a commemoration of King Eadwig as well as

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<sup>72</sup> “Peterborough Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 114.

<sup>73</sup> “Peterborough Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 115.

denouncement of him for allowing such cultural hybridity to occur.<sup>74</sup> The escalation in southern authors' rhetoric emphasizing the pious nature of prominent Anglo-Saxon figures develops concurrently with encroaching southern political leaders in the eastern kingdom of Mercia. However, for the eastern kingdoms of Northumbria and East Anglia which border Mercia, the mid-tenth century was the culmination of a developing Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. Therefore, with these various factors occurring simultaneously, the depiction of a southern political succession in the *ASC* offers an interesting illustration of southern authors forced to negotiate with changing identities.

### **Conclusion**

While these examples are not wholly representative of the complex relationship and various interactions Scandinavian raiders and settlers had with Anglo-Saxon Christianity, the development of increasingly formalized examples of cultural communication illustrates a trend toward cultural hybridization by approximately the mid-tenth century. The Lindisfarne Stone from the early ninth century was above all else an artistic and religious projection of prevailing fears. For the sculptor and likely many others, this Scandinavian attack on one of the most prominent religious locations was a situation comprehended through familiar notions of the end of days.

Therefore, while this stone is not an example of a symbiotic cultural exchange, the integration of Scandinavian figures into a decisive religious event for Anglo-Saxon Christians as the bearers of the final day of judgement asserts the centrality of Christianity to contemporary conceptualizations of the self within society. This example illustrates the understanding that

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<sup>74</sup> Hadley, *The Northern Danelaw: It's Social Structure, c. 800- c. 1100*, 157. An important factor to consider for this period around the mid-tenth century is the complicated assertion of power of Wessex over East Anglia. Hadley highlights the presence of large estates owned by West Saxon nobleman that by the mid-tenth century grew in size possibly to the point where Wessex leaders felt this area 'secured' as an extension of their rule.

Scandinavian raiders and native eastern Anglo-Saxons in the late eighth century were distinct groups. However, by time of King Eadwig's death in the mid-tenth century, these conceptualizations of society were broadened to include aspects of Scandinavian culture ultimately illustrating the development of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural hybridization in eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. While it is very unlikely that such cultural hybridization was the primary societal model for Anglo-Saxon communities with Scandinavian settlers, its development into existence by the mid-tenth century is nonetheless demonstrated through a combination of stone sculptures and textual evidence.

## Chapter Three

### Assigning Identities: Insiders and Outsiders

In the first chapter, I focused on the development of a hybridized Anglo-Scandinavian material culture culminating in the mid-tenth century. The following chapter then narrowed in on the broad topic of material culture and highlighted this hybridity in various religious references with implications toward identity within the textual sources. In this chapter, the discussion culminates with the textual representation of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian interactions from the ninth to the tenth century. The production of written sources such as annals meant to recount relevant and often pressing issues of a specific year commands a certain importance for what is included and what is omitted. No document is without its biases. When analyzing a source such as the *ASC* for references to Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian interactions, with most of its comprising manuscripts stemming from southern authors, a pro-Wessex rhetoric is to be expected. As highlighted in the first chapter, the cultural divide between eastern kingdoms such as East Anglia, and the southern kingdom of Wessex emphasized an early cultural differentiation between the two regions. While the formation of an Anglo-Scandinavian identity is illustrated through examples that remain from its material culture, the depiction of this identity from western authors highlights a two-part narrative of identity assertion and identity formation in late ninth century to the mid-tenth century.

By highlighting the rhetoric used to describe events involving Scandinavians, the textual sources provide examples of parameters for identity of not only the Scandinavians, but also for the western authors. As Ryan Lavelle and Simon Roffey have argued, these late West-Saxon texts might document an ethnogenesis of English identity.<sup>75</sup> Inherent in this process is the need to

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<sup>75</sup> Lavelle and Roffey, *Danes in Wessex: The Scandinavian Impact on Southern England, c. 800 - c. 1100*, 8–9.

differentiate between ‘cultural insiders’ – those who are believed to correctly participate within set parameters of the culture, and ‘outsiders’ – those who are believed to be acting outside of those set parameters. Thus, when analyzing West-Saxon descriptions of Scandinavian - or Anglo-Scandinavian - groups and individuals, the events deemed important enough to include in chronicled writings highlight what the two parties in question believed the decisive cultural differences between them to be. As I will show, in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, authors expressed such concerns and anxieties principally over questions of political allegiance and Christian piety – although these are not always depicted as separate categories.

### **Concerns in the Chronicle**

Within the various manuscripts of the *ASC*, differences among them in describing a particular event shows different regional assumptions and concerns. This is especially true when deciphering the ways in which a slight omission or addition may highlight an assumption of identity of a group of people, in this case, an Anglo-Saxon community invaded by Scandinavian raiders. The *WM* provides many examples of Scandinavian raids in the late ninth century and early tenth century, however, one detailed event in 878 highlights the western fear of shifting political alliances.

In order to understand why this document is helpful in identifying motives to create an ‘us vs. them’ situation, we should consider the *PM* as a comparable corresponding document. While the *WM* is considered to have remained true to a Winchester authorship until the early twelfth century,<sup>76</sup> our current example of the *PM* is believed to be a copy from the manuscript available at the Kentish library.<sup>77</sup> The *WM* and *PM* manuscripts of the *ASC* have similar

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<sup>76</sup> Alice Jorgensen, *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, vol. 23 (Belgium: Brepols, 2010), 6.

<sup>77</sup> Michael Swanton, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (New York: Routledge, 1996), xxvi.

structures and entry topics, but there are subtle differences in provided detail. One important example is a discrepancy in the entries of the WM and the PM regarding events in Chippenham in 878.

Wessex, as we have seen elsewhere, should have been a strong economic target for an invading force. Even though Scandinavian raids of Wessex began in 870, the invaders were unable to establish political control. In the meantime, by 873, Scandinavian armies had instituted ‘caretaker puppet’ authorities in Northumbria, East Anglia, and Mercia; leaving only Wessex under full Anglo-Saxon authority.<sup>78</sup> By the early tenth century, the southwestern Wessex county of Wiltshire had many important administrative and economic areas, including the town of Chippenham.<sup>79</sup> In an entry for 853 in the ASC, Chippenham was indeed highlighted as an important royal estate--the site of a royal marriage between Alfred of Wessex’s sister, and Burgred, king of Mercia.<sup>80</sup> The importance of the town helps explain Viking motivations for their raid of 878.

While the Anglo-Saxon King Alfred was to spend Twelfth Night in Chippenham, a Scandinavian army led by Guthrum initiated a surprise attack on Twelfth Night’s final day--January 5th, 878. Immediately following this surprise attack, King Alfred and members of the royal family fled to the nearby wetlands of Somerset. This evasion by King Alfred along with Guthrum’s inability to successfully occupy Wessex, ultimately marked the end of Guthrum’s chance to take over the south. By the same token, Anglo-Saxon royal authority in England was threatened by the invasions and subsequent Scandinavian rule over previous Anglo-Saxon strongholds in the eastern England. With this in mind, I would like to highlight how the WM

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<sup>78</sup>John Haywood, *Northmen: The Viking Saga AD 793-1241* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2015), 48-59.

<sup>79</sup>Jeremy Haslam, *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England* (Sussex: Phillimore, 1984), 87.

<sup>80</sup>Haslam, *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*, 132.

serves as an example of an Anglo-Saxon interpretation of loyalty during a period of political instability and how that anxiety essentially manifested into a reactionary interpretation of identity.

According to the entries in both manuscripts, Scandinavian raiding armies had for decades moved from town to town, with the events at Chippenham falling within this pattern. It is therefore not necessarily the action itself which we may deem the most significant in this instance, but instead the reaction that was recorded in the WM, yet omitted from the PM. The entries are in fact nearly identical, except for a small extra phrase in the WM. Below I have provided the two entries corresponding to the events in Wessex in 878 found in the two manuscripts – WM and PM, respectively.

WM: “Here the raiding-army stole away in midwinter after Twelfth Night to Chippenham, and over-rode and occupied the land of Wessex, and drove many of the people across the sea and the greatest part of the others they overrode – **and they turned to them**<sup>81</sup> – except for Alfred the king, and he with a small troop went with difficulty through woods and into swamp-fastness.”<sup>82</sup>

PM: “Here the raiding-army stole away in midwinter after Twelfth Night to Chippenham, and over-rode and occupied the land of Wessex, and drove many of the people across the sea and the greatest part of the others they overrode– except for Alfred the king with a small troop went with difficulty through woods and into swamp-fastness.”<sup>83</sup>

While this slight omission in the PM could be attributed to scribal error, it could also highlight an intentional delineation; clearly separating those who are loyal to King Alfred and those who at some level acquiesced to the Scandinavian raiding parties. Thus, the addition of this phrase could show the author’s allegiance to King Alfred. He emphasizes that Alfred was the only one to not submit or be defeated by the raiding army highlighting an unwavering leader worthy of respect. But equally, when trying to understand the conceptualization of identity

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<sup>81</sup> Emphasis added. The phrase is used frequently in the ASC to refer to a group’s change of allegiance and loyalty.

<sup>82</sup> “Winchester Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 74.

<sup>83</sup> “Peterborough Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 75.

during this period, this brief inclusion could highlight a perceived ‘us vs. them’ mentality and the precarious quality of loyalty in the eyes of an Anglo-Saxon narrator. As Davies highlights, “we have the facts recorded meticulously, and probably with a deliberate political purpose of impressing the reader and hearer, in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.”<sup>84</sup>

To make this argument, an important factor to consider is the degree of contemporaneousness to the specific event in Chippenham as well as the political association of the scribe. For example, the WM is “the oldest surviving manuscript of the Chronicle, and the only one in which the language was not brought into conformity with the late West Saxon literary standard.”<sup>85</sup> Thus, the additional phrase found in the WM could be due to a lack of early mistranslation. Because this text was not translated at an early stage in its composition and does not have what may have been a mistranslation or scribal omission in the PM, the WM provides a more telling account of existing parameters for cultural distinction.<sup>86</sup>

In noting that some Anglo-Saxons ‘turned to’ foreign raiders, the southern Anglo-Saxon author illustrated the overall importance of political affiliation for not only himself, but for his audience. In doing so, this author emphasized a moment in which cultural insiders were suddenly portrayed as outsiders following a shift in political allegiance. The immediacy of this shift then asserts the central nature of allegiance to the understanding of identity, for the attribution of identity within this example has a similar rhetoric to other depictions of cultural differentiation in the *ASC* highlighted in this work. In any case, there is a notable intent to delineate a ‘pro-

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<sup>84</sup> Wendy Davies, *From the Viking to the Normans*, The Short Oxford History of the British Isles (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 56.

<sup>85</sup> Swanton, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, xxi.

<sup>86</sup> Similarly, distance from the region Wessex, where we find Chippenham, may play a role. When comparing the distance between Wessex and Winchester, and Wessex and Peterborough however, it seems to become a nonissue. It is argued that the current copy of the Peterborough manuscript is a copy of the edition at the Kentish library available in 1116 CE. See Swanton, xxvi. If this is in fact the case, distance from Wessex no longer remains a looming factor, for Kent and Winchester are similar distances away from Chippenham.

Wessex' and 'anti-Wessex' narrative. This type of narrative in the ASC is highlighted by Lavelle and Roffey as early makings of a proto-English identity.<sup>87</sup>

A further example of the importance of explicit loyalty conveyed in the 878 entries is an excerpt from the 921 entry in the WM that describes an account of a specific 'reversion' from Scandinavian to West-Saxon political loyalty. The final section of this entry states that

“King Edward went with a West Saxon army to Colchester, and improved the stronghold and restored it where it was broken down earlier. And a great tribe, both in East Anglia and in Essex, that was earlier under the control of the Danes, turned to him; and all the raiding army in East Anglia swore union with him: that they wanted all that he wanted, and would keep peace both on sea and on land. And the raiding-army that belonged to Cambridge individually chose him as their lord and protector, and confirmed that with oaths just as he determined”<sup>88</sup>

By highlighting that peace was the primary ambition of King Edward and this 'tribe' became disenthralled with their previous Scandinavian leaders, the author centralized a southern identity around the characteristics of an individual while simultaneously assigning a generalized assumption to the 'cultural outsiders'. However, what is significant about this account is how a specific group of people were portrayed as having been in a 'gray zone' between identifiable cultural parameters. On one hand, this 'tribe' was described as seeking peaceful leadership in a different authority highlighting their previous Scandinavian rulers as turbulent and unsettling. Then on the other hand, it was not until these Eastern Anglo-Saxons “turned to [King Edward]” and expressed an explicit loyalty that they were accepted as 'cultural insiders'. Now operating within a major southern cultural parameter of sworn, or explicit loyalty, this shift from an outsider to an insider position was emphasized as a forthright process.

This process also highlights the rhetorical shift from referencing an outsider group identity to then *individually* establishing a personal political allegiance to the West-Saxon King

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<sup>87</sup> Lavelle and Roffey, *Danes in Wessex: The Scandinavian Impact on Southern England, c. 800 - c. 1100*, 13.

<sup>88</sup> "Winchester Manuscript," *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 103.

Edward. It is possible that this differentiation between a group and an individual identity is a rhetorical tactic emphasizing the desire for each individual to profess their own allegiance, however this could also be the by-product of in-group and out-group associations. However, in either case, this example illustrates the concept of ‘homogenizing the other’, or the generalized grouping together of perceived cultural outsiders. Since it is only after swearing oaths that the members of this group are signified individually, this example emphasizes the generalization in deeming this ‘tribe’ distinct from the author’s understanding his cultural parameters. Essentially, the scribe assigns a single indistinct identity onto this group coming from the east in order to then contrast it with the immense importance of swearing one’s loyalty.<sup>89</sup>.

#### **Assessing Asser**

In *Asser’s Life of King Alfred*, the same 878 CE event at Chippenham is recorded, however the tone of this entry seems much more passive and neglects to mention the reaction by King Alfred and his subsequent fleeing of Chippenham following the raid. Instead this text focuses on how the “pagans...subdued almost all the dwellers in that region under their sway.”<sup>90</sup> Then in the following entry, Asser begins to describe the anguish King Alfred faced as he was forced to take refuge in the woods of nearby Somerset. In this description, Alfred is said to have had to resort to taking food “from the pagans, and from the Christians even, who had submitted to the pagan yoke.”<sup>91</sup>

In these two entries, Asser emphasizes the ‘yoke’ and ‘sway’ of the Scandinavian raiders in the southern Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex. This characterization directly illustrated the southern anxieties of shifting political allegiance, but it also begs the question of the nature of

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<sup>89</sup> A final point on this example is the factor of control. Implicit in these authors willingness to accept these once cultural outsiders is the notion that previously they were oppressed from doing so.

<sup>90</sup> Jane, *Asser’s Life of King Alfred*, 37.

<sup>91</sup>Jane. *Ibid.*

these shifts. For example, the term ‘sway’ could illustrate a Scandinavian influence that was coupled with an Anglo-Saxon acquiescence to ultimately produce this example of shifting allegiance. However, the ‘pagan yoke’ highlighted in the second example may denote a stronger narrative of a compulsory shift to Scandinavian allegiance. However, in either case, a significant indicator of the narrative this pro-Wessex author tried to create is the use of the term ‘dwellers’ in reference to southern Anglo-Saxons that were ‘subdued’ under the influence of the Scandinavians. In this example, Asser depicts those that may once have been considered to be Anglo-Saxon cultural insiders as seemingly insignificant and culturally distant inhabitants of the region. This pro-Wessex rhetoric therefore further highlights the importance of political allegiance to the assumption of identity during the end of the ninth century

The true scope and duration of this Scandinavian authority over those in the region of Chippenham in the late ninth century is impossible to know for certain. However, accompanying the depiction of shifting political allegiance is a brief reference to the importance of religion in creating a pro-Alfred rhetoric. In the previous chapter, the baptism of Guthrum illustrated Scandinavian involvement with Christianity that in the tenth century developed into manifestations of Anglo-Scandinavian hybridity. However, for the purposes of this section, I would like to focus on the rhetoric surrounding the event as it pertains to the differentiation of identity by southern authors in late ninth century Wessex. In *Asser*, prior to Guthrum’s baptism, the Scandinavian raiding party was referred to broadly as ‘pagans’<sup>92</sup>. Then in the entry highlighting the time just before and during the baptism, the author switches to referring to them as his “most chosen men.”<sup>93</sup> While it is understandable to denote the shift in rhetoric describing Guthrum for having just completed the baptismal ceremony, it is interesting that this sense of

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<sup>92</sup> This is a common term used in the *Chronicle* to denote Scandinavians.

<sup>93</sup> Jane, *Asser’s Life of King Alfred*. 43.

respect was assigned to his soldiers as well. This depiction highlights that the characteristics associated with the leader of a given people are in turn ascribed to the group as a whole. However, even though these attributes are given to the group as a whole, there is still a greater individuality attributed to them in this entry compared to the broad designation of 'pagans'. This example parallels the previous example of permeable cultural parameters and the accompanying shift from assigning a generalized group identity to more individualized ones emphasized in the *ASC*. In this case, the 'pagan' warriors are in a similar situation as the East Anglian 'tribe', for they both are assigned a level of homogeneity until they are recognized as politically loyal to West Saxon leaders.

This direct notion of a linked identity between Guthrum and his men illustrate both the importance of political allegiance to the assumption of identity and the permeable division between being a cultural insider and a cultural outsider. These examples from both the *ASC* and *Asser's Life of King Alfred* illustrate movements toward cultural inclusivity and toward cultural exclusivity. By highlighting both of these aspects, the texts illustrate the central importance of political allegiance and Christian piety to conceptions of identity in the late ninth into the tenth century. The notion that the rhetoric in these texts is so inextricably linked to these outward expressions of allegiance and piety establish these categories as pivotal, for it is not until the shift has been made deeming them cultural insiders that they are treated in the text with any level of individualism.

## Conclusion

During the Settlement Period of Anglo-Saxon England's "Viking Age," political and social relationships among Anglo-Saxon kingdoms was further complicated by shifting notions of identity provoked by the arrival of Scandinavians. Prolonged insular interactions began with raids in the late eighth century and ninth centuries, and grew to include sites of overwintering, and eventually resulted in more permanent settlements. Such sustained interactions facilitated the development of a hybridized material culture in the late ninth century, a development that reached its zenith in the tenth century. Placing artifacts within the contemporary historical narrative produced by the available textual sources, a greater understanding of parameters of cultural inclusion and exclusion. The multiple references to shifting political allegiance between Scandinavian leaders and West-Saxon leaders (and vice versa) in the *ASC* highlights the central importance of political affiliation to the construction and assumption of identity to West-Saxon authors. In many of these references, a corresponding questioning of Christian piety cannot necessarily be separated from this understanding of political allegiance. These two central points of comparison used by the authors of *Asser* and the *ASC* establish pivotal cultural parameters from the perspective of these authors. The fluidity with which cultural insiders became outsiders and vice versa was centered around their outward expression of loyalty to a political leader, bolstered by claims to Christian piety.

On a broader note, these seemingly pivotal instances of shifting political allegiance must be contextualized through the authors' motivations for depicting these scenes in annalistic writing. N. P. Brooks emphasized the importance of this aspect in ninth century Anglo-Saxon texts as a means of concentrating a focus on the rhetoric as a response to political and religious

uncertainty.<sup>94</sup> As I discussed in the introduction, much of the *Chronicle* was meant to assert the superiority of Wessex and the Alfredian court in the late ninth century, Brooks also highlights the contemporary fear rooted in the “[c]oncern for the survival of Christianity.”<sup>95</sup> When southern Anglo-Saxon kings imbue a secular role with a religious significance, the stress on explicit political allegiance served a two-fold purpose. During Alfred’s reign, the baptism of Guthrum and the shift in rhetoric used to describe the Scandinavians as more individualized also gave these Scandinavians a sense of legitimacy in the eyes of the West Saxons later allowing for formal political agreements.<sup>96</sup> Further contextualizing the relationship between Wessex and the Scandinavian forces at this time, the political landscape illustrated not the overwhelming superiority of Wessex in defying a Scandinavian threat, but rather situated Wessex in a state of *preservation*. Surrounded by the dissolution of other formally distinct kingdoms by Scandinavian forces in the mid to late ninth century, such an embodiment may have been political tactic to bolster the clout of the leader to quell concerns of political dominance in the region.<sup>97</sup>

Moving ahead to the end of the “Viking Age” in England, approximately the mid to late eleventh century, it is interesting to note the continued fight for political control by Scandinavian and Norman leaders in the area of the ‘Danelaw’. For example, the Worcester Manuscript highlights the newly crowned King of England William’s efforts to erect numerous castles in areas such as York and Nottingham beginning after his coronation to the year 1070.<sup>98</sup> This same period was also marked by Scandinavian incursions on the same areas in Danelaw. For example, the Worcester Manuscript highlights that in 1068 there was a fleet of 240 Danish ships that

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<sup>94</sup> N. P. Brooks, “England in the Ninth Century: The Crucible of Defeat,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 29 (1979): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3679110>, 1-2; 13.

<sup>95</sup> Brooks, “England in the Ninth Century,” 13.

<sup>96</sup> The Alfred-Guthrum Treaty c. 886 which established boundaries between the Scandinavian and Wessex controlled regions of England and basic codes of conduct expected from the two neighboring areas.

<sup>97</sup> Brooks, “England in the Ninth Century,” 1.

<sup>98</sup> “Worcester Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 202-204.

sailed into the Humber River and eventually, with help from “people of the land,”<sup>99</sup> demolished a castle erected by King William in Northumbria.

These opposing forces vying for political authority in this region along with the fact that ‘Danelaw’ as a term designating most eastern England was used more frequently after the Norman conquest rather than abandoned for less delineating rhetoric highlights the continued complex social composition of England in the latter half of the Early Middle Ages.<sup>100</sup> This research began in the eighth century with a discussion of Ipswich Ware and the implications of a lack of involvement in regional economics on assessing cultural differentiation between East Anglia and Wessex. Although English historiography assigns the title of Anglo-Saxon England to this period, but it does not reflect the intricacies or differentiation of cultures within and between Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.<sup>101</sup> After the Norman Conquest, England is often referred to as ‘Anglo-Norman’ making it easier to immediately contextually situate a discussion to a specific period of English history. However, again we fall into the same issue, for as we have seen above this is a period not only marked by the presence and authority of the Normans, but it is also marked by the presence and authority of Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian groups as well.

Terms such as Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman describe eras of English history, but they do so in ethnic terms that simplify a more complex story and erase unwanted peoples and identities from history. Concepts such as these fall within the large category of historiographical terms that often construct a particular historical narrative and curtail the cultural mosaic of the specific time and place in question. By highlighting the development of a regionalized hybrid culture, I aim to highlight such complexities and oppose notions of a sweeping English cultural

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<sup>99</sup> “Worcester Manuscript,” *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 204.

<sup>100</sup> Hadley, *The Northern Danelaw Its Social Structure, C. 800-1100*, 300.

<sup>101</sup> The use of the ‘Angles’ to define the inhabitants of England can be traced back to Bede in the 8<sup>th</sup> century

hegemony between the eighth and eleventh centuries. Even within an already composite social landscape, new identities can still develop, therefore a particular region must be situated within its historical context to develop an understanding of shared cultural influences that may otherwise go unnoticed.

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