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*Leeds Studies in English*  
School of English  
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## THE DISSEMINATION OF ALCUIN'S *DE VIRTUTIBUS ET VITIIS LIBER* IN OLD ENGLISH: A PRELIMINARY SURVEY

By CLARE A. LEES

The connections between the Carolingian Reforms in eighth and ninth-century France, and the Benedictine Revival in tenth and eleventh-century England, have become increasingly interesting to scholars. A notable instance of these connections is the use by Ælfric, one of the leading proponents of the English Revival, of Carolingian homiliaries in the composition of his *Catholic Homilies*.<sup>1</sup> Homiliaries, collections of homilies by the Fathers arranged for the Church calendar, provide one example of the Carolingian interest in the compilation and abbreviation of patristic literature. Another kind of ecclesiastical handbook, the florilegium, assembles notable *sententiae patrum*, and also appears to have had some popularity.<sup>2</sup> The success of such handbooks in Anglo-Saxon England is indicated not merely by the use of homiliaries and florilegia by English writers, but also by the fact that one homilist, Wulfstan, compiled his own 'florilegium', the *Commonplace Book*.<sup>3</sup> This paper briefly examines the nature of the florilegium, and then assesses the evidence for the knowledge and dissemination of such books in Old English, with particular respect to Alcuin's *De Virtutibus et Vitiis Liber*.<sup>4</sup>

Florilegia in the Carolingian Period.

There are at least two main categories of florilegia - the Classical and the Christian. The Classical florilegium comprised extracts from Classical writers, selected for their ethical content and, no doubt, playing an important role in the school curriculum.<sup>5</sup> Christian florilegia or *florilèges ascétiques*,<sup>6</sup> on the other hand, consisted of selections from the Bible and patristic writers concerning a wide range of Christian moral issues, and focusing on the vices and virtues. These florilegia, McKitterick suggests, are the subject of several edicts of Carolingian councils, advocating that every priest should possess a few *sententiae patrum* for his own education, and that of his congregation.<sup>7</sup>

The subject of these Christian florilegia, at least initially, was the vices and virtues. Christian florilegia thus articulate the struggle facing every Christian in this world, and suggest models for his behaviour. The compilation of such handbooks must be ascribed in part to the emphasis on the vices in the larger body of penitential literature in this period and later.<sup>8</sup> However, the particular structure of the florilegium, presenting a convenient, pre-selected digest of Biblical and patristic thinking on traditional

moral issues, made such writings accessible to lay and cleric alike.<sup>9</sup>

The medieval popularity of florilegia is evidenced by the large number of extant manuscripts. Despite an apparent similarity of content and purpose (the moral education of every Christian), the florilegia vary in structure and content according to the compilers' principles of selection, producing works as different as Defensor's encyclopaedic *Liber Scintillarum* and Alcuin's more modest *De Virtutibus*.<sup>10</sup> The intention of the *De Virtutibus* was to produce a small handbook of *sententiae patrum* to stimulate devotional study by, for example, presenting a clear formal arrangement of the vices and virtues.<sup>11</sup> Written in 799 or 800 by a prominent figure of the Carolingian Reform, the *De Virtutibus* contains thirty-five chapters and a dedicatory letter.<sup>12</sup> Its first twenty-six chapters deal with subjects similar to those of the *Liber Scintillarum* (wisdom and faith as well as pride and deceit). Chapters twenty-seven to thirty-four catalogue the eight capital sins, briefly mentioning their *remedia* (complementary virtues);<sup>13</sup> the final chapter treats the four cardinal virtues. Unlike Defensor, Alcuin does not name his authorities (though he clearly draws on Cassian, Gregory and Isidore for the schema of the vices and virtues), emphasising the moral qualities themselves.<sup>14</sup>

The difficulties of dealing with florilegia are highlighted by the uncertain relationship of Alcuin's and Defensor's handbooks:<sup>15</sup> both draw on similar Biblical and patristic material, and both may have used an intermediate collection of extracts such as those in Isidore's *Sententiae*. Both works, popular in their own right, generated other florilegia and were used in the composition of Latin homilies.<sup>16</sup> Florilegia, in general, are compilations of brief extracts from various sources on traditional moral subjects; inevitably such handbooks became part of the reference material available to subsequent writers, either as replacements or supplements to more comprehensive collections of the works of the Fathers. Problems of locating the direct or ultimate sources of Carolingian florilegia, and their derivatives, complicate any assessment of their influence in Anglo-Saxon England.

#### Florilegia in Anglo-Saxon England.

Like the *Liber Scintillarum*,<sup>17</sup> Alcuin's *De Virtutibus* seems to have been held in some regard in England. According to H. Gneuss, at least two Latin manuscripts have English associations: London, BL Cotton Vespasian MS D vi (saec. X med.); and Avranches, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 81 (saec. XI<sup>2</sup>).<sup>18</sup> In addition, two partial translations of the *De Virtutibus* are extant: one in London, BL Cotton Vespasian MS D xiv (saec. XII med.) (chapters 1-16 only), and the other in Cambridge, University Library MS II. 1. 33 (saec. XII<sup>2</sup>) (chapters 1-13 only).<sup>19</sup> English translations of two chapters, "De Non Tardandi Converti ad Deum" ("Be Gecyrrred-nyssse"), and "De Perseverantia" ("Be Durhwununge"), appear in London, BL Cotton Tiberius MS A iii (saec. XI med.).<sup>20</sup> Latin manuscripts of other florilegia such as the *Collectio Canonum Hiberniensium* and Smaragdus's *Diadema Monachorum*, as well as works

such as Isidore's *Sententiae* also appear to have circulated in Anglo-Saxon England.<sup>21</sup>

Part of the reason for the popularity of Alcuin's *De Virtutibus* must be due to his convenient schema of the eight deadly vices. The number of extant manuscripts dealing with the deadly sins such as those of Prudentius' *Psychomachia* and Aldhelm's prose *De Laude Virginitatis* witness a general interest in this kind of material.<sup>22</sup> It was a subject particularly apt for times of penance and, indeed, many of the Old English adaptations of Alcuin are extant in homilies written for the two seasons of Lent and Rogationtide.

Evidence for the knowledge of florilegia in England is not simply a question of identifying extant Latin manuscripts with English associations, however. Other evidence for the transmission of florilegia may be had from the identification of the use of florilegia in Old English writing. Extracts from Paulinus of Aquileia's *Liber Exhortationis*, for example, furnish sources for sections of three anonymous Old English homilies.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the Old English translations of the *De Virtutibus* already mentioned, various adaptations of Alcuin's work have been identified in Old English homilies. These include adaptations in three pre-Benedictine Revival homilies; Vercelli XX,<sup>24</sup> Vercelli III and its variant versions,<sup>25</sup> and an anonymous Rogationtide homily.<sup>26</sup> Later homilies using Alcuin include Ælfric's *Dominica in Media Quadragesime* from his Second Series of *Catholic Homilies* and Wulfstan's *Her Ongynþ be Cristendome*.<sup>27</sup>

Vercelli XX contains the most faithful treatment of the *De Virtutibus* in Old English homilies, although even here transmission is not straightforward or direct. This penitential homily is a compilation containing two adaptations from Alcuin. The first, a discussion of the deadly sins together with their respective virtues and the four cardinal virtues, forms the body of the homily. It follows Alcuin's basic presentation, beginning with a description of each vice and an enumeration of other vices engendered by it; and concluding with mention of the practices which may overcome each vice. Professor Cross has shown that this section is not a literal translation but "a considered selection, accurately understood by an excellent Latinist", who selects details from each chapter of the relevant section of the *De Virtutibus* and confidently handles Alcuin's wide range of moral vocabulary.<sup>28</sup> Yet the translator is apparently content to continue the process of selection and abbreviation begun by Alcuin; as Szarmach notes, his most significant departure from Alcuin is to introduce the vices as a mnemonic list which, given the number of lists of the vices circulating in this period, is hardly innovatory.<sup>29</sup> Professor Cross has recently indicated to me that the direct source for this section is a short passage found in Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 25 entitled "Predicatio bona: de VIII vitiis idemque virtutibus". The compiler of Vercelli XX thus did not use Alcuin directly, and also seems to have used Pembroke College MS 25 for his second passage in the homily taken from Alcuin, that on almsgiving, which might otherwise have looked like a direct translation of capitulum XVII, "De Eleemosynis" ("Concerning Alms"). J. Turville-Petre skilfully

demonstrated that this extract had already been re-worked in another Latin piece before reaching Vercelli XX,<sup>30</sup> as has now been confirmed by H.L. Spencer's recent identification of this Latin source in Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 25.<sup>31</sup> Vercelli XX, therefore, apparently offers evidence both of direct dissemination, and indirect transmission via an intermediary, of Alcuin's *De Virtutibus*. However, the work of J. Turville-Petre, H.L. Spencer and Professor Cross shows that both Alcuinic sections depend on two intermediate sources found in one manuscript, so that the compiler of Vercelli XX is unlikely to be the translator of either section. A source analysis of Vercelli XX highlights some problems in dealing with florilegia transmission in Old English; more are revealed in examining the transmission of the *De Virtutibus* in other pre-Reform homilies.

Another Vercelli homily, Vercelli III, was first noted by M. Förster as using several chapters from Alcuin's *De Virtutibus*, though in this case from the earlier sections on pride and hope, for example, not from that on the vices.<sup>32</sup> J. Turville-Petre noted similar collections of this material preserved in an Old Icelandic homily and in an Old English homily found in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS 343, amongst others. The identification of other specific elements from these homilies in various Latin handbooks, including the *Liber Scintillarum* and the *Collectio Canonum Hiberniensium*, led Turville-Petre, aided by the evidence of Vercelli XX, to postulate the existence of a lost Latin source behind the independent vernacular translations. She suggested that this Latin source, a pastiche from various sources, had used a florilegium for its material.<sup>33</sup> H.L. Spencer has again confirmed Turville-Petre's deductions, by finding this lost Latin source in Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 25, the best extant representative of a homiliary thought to date from the Carolingian period.<sup>34</sup>

Vercelli III and its variants provide evidence of a considerable dissemination of the *De Virtutibus* before it reached the Old English homilist. It is possible to reconstruct this dissemination: Alcuin combined extracts from the Bible and patristic sources, or used a florilegium himself, for the *De Virtutibus*. Some of his chapters were recombined in another florilegium, now lost but resembling the *Collectio Canonum Hiberniensium*. This florilegium provided some of the material for the Latin homily printed by Spencer. This Latin homily, or something similar, was translated by the homilist of Vercelli III.

Rogationtide homily 7, in J. Bazire and J.E. Cross's recent edition, appears to provide evidence of a more direct dissemination of the *De Virtutibus*. This penitential homily for Rogationtide opens with an exhortation to confession, adapted with slight modification from the chapter on confession in the *De Virtutibus*. M. Godden has demonstrated that the homily is a compilation, drawing on a number of other vernacular homilies, and he identifies at least fourteen different sources. Nevertheless, Godden suggests that the opening is probably the work of the compiler.<sup>35</sup> If the compiler did translate the chapter on confession directly from a manuscript of Alcuin's work, his translation gives some indication

of its availability. However, the use of a Latin source by a compiler whose habitual method of composition is to compile from vernacular sources, given the evidence for transmission of Vercelli XX and Vercelli III, equally suggests the possibility of an intermediate source. The opening section of the Rogationtide homily, therefore, need not conclusively indicate that the homilist was aware of the *De Virtutibus*, only that he knew a convenient discussion of confession that would provide an apt introduction to his homily.

The very popularity of Alcuin's *De Virtutibus* in the early medieval period, together with its evident attraction as a reference work from the Carolingian period, resulted in its rapid use in other Latin florilegia and homilies. Evidence of Alcuin in an Old English homily does not necessarily mean that Alcuin is the direct source for that section of the homily, although his work remains the ultimate source. These three pre-Benedictine Reform homilies, Vercelli XX, Vercelli III and Rogationtide 7, indicate an early dissemination of the *De Virtutibus*, from the original work through Carolingian florilegia and homilies into Old English, by which time an awareness of the work as specifically Alcuin's had assumed less importance.

The use of Alcuin by Ælfric was first identified by M. Förster in a passage dealing with the vices and virtues in a Lenten homily, *Dominica in Media Quadragesime*. On the same occasion, Förster suggested that Ælfric may have also used Cassian, one of Alcuin's own sources.<sup>36</sup> As Förster indicated, Ælfric's brief discussion of the complementary virtues (*remedia*) appears to be a direct translation from Alcuin, cap. XXXIV; compare Alcuin:

Prima superbia per humilitatem, gula per abstinentiam, fornicatio per castitatem, avaritia per abstinentiam [MS S. Jac., largitatem et contemptum mundi], ira per patientiam, acedia per instantiam boni operis, tristitia mala per laetitiam spiritualem, vana gloria per charitatem Dei [Al., per sapientiam] [vincitur]:<sup>37</sup> (First pride [is overcome] by humility, gluttony by abstinence, fornication by chastity, avarice by abstinence [liberality and contempt of the world], anger by patience, sloth by perseverance in good works, evil grief by spiritual joy, vain glory by the love of God [by wisdom].)

with Ælfric:

We sceolon oferwinnan ærest gifernysse mid gemetegunge. ætes and wates; Forlíger. oððe gálnysse. mid clænnysse. swa þæt se læweda his æwe healde. and se gehadoda godes ðeow symle on clænnysse wunige. swa swa se canon. him cuðlice sægð; We sceolon oferwinnan woruldlice gytsunge. mid cystignysse ures clænan modes; And weamette mid wíslice geþylde. and woruldlice unrotnysse. mid gastlicere blisse; Asolcennysse. mid soðre anrædnysse; Yðelne gylp. mid

incundre lufe; Modignysse. mid micelre eadmodnysse.<sup>38</sup>

However, Ælfric has made slight modifications and reorganised the list to correspond with his own list of the vices. Ælfric's definition of the two types of grief (*tristitia*) also appears to be based on Alcuin, although the ultimate source is Cassian.<sup>39</sup>

There are general similarities between Ælfric's schema of the vices and that found in the *De Virtutibus*. Ælfric, like Alcuin, gives a description of each vice, its progeny and its *remedia*. However, the passage on the vices in Ælfric consists of an introduction and brief enumeration of the vices, followed by a fuller list with individual descriptions, and concluding with the list of complementary vices and virtues. Ælfric's presentation thus differs from Alcuin's which includes the *remedia* both in the individual chapters and at the end of the section. By dividing the vices and the *remedia* into two lists, Ælfric is able to repeat the list of the vices three times for the benefit of the congregation.

There are other significant differences between Ælfric and Alcuin. It has already been mentioned that Alcuin's principal source for the vices section of the *De Virtutibus* is Cassian, and that some of the individual descriptions are taken from Gregory.<sup>40</sup> Alcuin's major innovation in inheriting Cassian's list is to put pride at the head of the list, and to reverse the order of despair and sloth. The other influential list of the vices in this period is that found in Gregory's *Moralia*, and the importance attached by Alcuin to pride is almost certainly due to Gregory.<sup>41</sup> When Ælfric enumerates the vices, his list is closer to the Cassianic, rather than the Alcuinic, list. This is most clearly illustrated by the following table:<sup>42</sup>

CASSIAN	GREGORY	ALCUIN	ÆLFRIC
gula	(superbia)	superbia	gyfernyss
fornicatio	inanis gloria	gula	galnyss
avaritia	invidia	fornicatio	gytsung
ira	ira	avaritia	weamet
tristitia	tristitia	ira	unrotnys
acedia	avaritia	acedia	asolcennyss
cenodoxia	ventris ingluvies	tristitia	ydel gylp
superbia	luxuria	cenodoxia	modignys
gluttony	(pride)	pride	gluttony
fornication	vain glory	gluttony	fornication
avarice	envy	fornication	avarice
anger	anger	avarice	anger
despair	despair	anger	despair
sloth	avarice	sloth	sloth
vain glory	gluttony	despair	vain glory
pride	fornication	vain glory	pride.

The order of the vices had not completely stabilized in Anglo-Saxon England,<sup>43</sup> and this probably accounts for Ælfric's sensitivity about placing pride last - he supplies an explanation:

Modignyss is endenext gesett on getele ðæra  
 heafodleahtra. for ðan ðe se únwara on ende oft  
 modegað on godum weorcum. and nele gode ðancian.  
 ðe hine mid halgum mægnum. healice geglengde.<sup>44</sup>

Other lists of the vices such as those found in Wulfstan, in Vercelli III and in Theodulf's *Capitula*, also place pride last,<sup>45</sup> so the possibility of a direct influence from Cassian is unlikely. A similar reason probably lies behind Ælfric's justification of eight, as opposed to the Gregorian seven, vices. The explanation given by Ælfric, the analogy to the seven Canaanite nations together with Egypt, is found in other commentaries on the vices but not in Alcuin. It appears to derive ultimately from Origen, but is also found in Cassian and Aldhelm's prose *De Laude Virginitatis*.<sup>46</sup>

The difference in the order of the vices and the use of additional material by Ælfric indicates that the *De Virtutibus* was not Ælfric's only source. This is also suggested by a comparison of the descriptions of the vices in both works. Despite the difficulties in comparing a brief list of vices found in a homily, and a fuller discussion found in a florilegium, there is a lack of verbal correspondence between Ælfric and Alcuin. Some of the descriptions, such as that of avarice,<sup>47</sup> do bear a general similarity but this is inevitable given the use of the same subject by both writers. The image of gluttony in Ælfric is much more explicit than that in Alcuin:

Witodlice ðurh gifernyssa was Adám se frumsceapena  
 man beþeht. ða ða hé onbirigde þæs forbodenan apples . . .  
 per quam primi parentes humani generis paradisi  
 felicitatem perdiderunt . . .<sup>48</sup>

(through which the first parents of the human race  
 lost the joy of paradise . . .)

The temptation of Adam is the archetypal example of gluttony: similar examples may be found in Cassian and Wulfstan,<sup>49</sup> and there is no need to regard Alcuin as Ælfric's direct source. Similarly, Ælfric's discussion of pride appears to be based on Alcuin, cap. XXVII; however, the statement "se geworhte englas to deoflum" is not found in this chapter but in the earlier chapter also on pride, cap. XXIII: "Nam superbia ex angelis daemones fecit" ('for pride made devils from angels').<sup>50</sup> This statement is commonly associated with pride in florilegia, and again, there is no need to regard Alcuin as the direct source.<sup>51</sup> The apparent similarities between the 'obvious' Latin source, Alcuin, and the Old English writer, Ælfric, arise, in fact, because both writers are using the same tradition.

Ælfric discusses the vices and virtues in some detail on two other occasions; in the *Sermo de Memoria Sanctorum* from the *Lives of Saints*, and in an English Pastoral Letter (Fehr III).<sup>52</sup> The source for the *Sermo* remains unidentified, but Fehr suggests that the *De Virtutibus* is the source for the Pastoral Letter.<sup>53</sup> Despite variations between Ælfric's three detailed lists, both in the order



of the vices and in the descriptions, there are more verbal echoes between the English lists than between any single English list and Alcuin. For this reason, Ælfric's use of these lists merits further attention.

The difference in the order of the vices from the lists in the *Dominica in Media Quadragesime* homily, the *Sermo* and the Pastoral Letter is best demonstrated by the following table:<sup>54</sup>

DOMINICA	SERMO	PASTORAL LETTER
gyfernyss	gula/gyfernyss	superbia/mody3niss
galnyss	fornicatio/galnyss	3ula/3yferniss
gytsung	avaritia/gitsung	fornicatio/3alniss
weamet	ira/weamodnyss	avaritia/3ytsunc3
unrotnys	tristitia/unrotnyss	ira/weamodniss
asolcennyss	accidia/asolcennyss	accidia/asolcennyss
ydel gylp	iactantia/ydel gylp	tristitia/únrótnyss
modignyss	superbia/modignyss	iactantia/3y1p, 3etot.

Although the *Sermo* and the Pastoral Letter both use Latin and Old English equivalents for the names of the vices, the *Sermo* list is identical in order to that of the earlier *Dominica* homily. In contrast, the Pastoral Letter list follows the Alcuinic order of the vices, most notably by placing pride first - another indication of the instability of the order of the vices.<sup>55</sup> The Pastoral Letter is also closer to Alcuin in its structural framework than Ælfric's other two lists.<sup>56</sup> However, both the *Dominica* homily and the Pastoral Letter preface the discussion of the vices with an explication of the ten commandments,<sup>57</sup> and there are direct verbal echoes of the *Dominica* in the Pastoral Letter in the treatment of the individual vices. Compare the discussion of pride, for example:

*Dominica:*

Se eahteoða leahter is modignys. *se leahter is ord and ende ælces yfeles. se geworhte englas to deoflum.* and ælcre synne anginn is modignyss; Þonne se man ðurh modignysse forsihð his scyppendes beboda. þonne sona sceal he befeallan on sumum seaðe sweartra synna . . .<sup>58</sup>

Pastoral Letter:

Se forma heafod-leahtor is on leden superbia and on englisc mody3niss.  
*Seo macode to deoflum þa wlitizan enc3las, þe wunedon on heofonum.*  
 And se modiz3a mann ne mæ3 cuman to heofonum, ác byð ðara deofla 3efera, butan he þæs dysiz3es 3eswi3e. Forðon-þe modiz3niss is swiðe micel dysiz3 and se wisa mann nát, on hwan he modiz3e.  
*Seo modiz3niss is ælces yfeles órd and ende . . .*<sup>59</sup>

(my italics).

Despite differences in structural framework between the *Dominica* homily and the Pastoral Letter, similar parallels may be found in the descriptions of gluttony, avarice and anger, as well as the *remedia* and the progeny of each vice. On each occasion, comparison with Alcuin suggests a close relationship between the two English lists, rather than between Alcuin and Ælfric.<sup>60</sup>

The *Sermo* complicates the issue slightly; it uses the same order of the vices and a similar structural framework to the *Dominica* homily, but uses material for some of the vices new to any of Ælfric's lists or Alcuin's florilegium. The descriptions of fornication and avarice can be paralleled, however, in Isidore and in the *Liber Scintillarum*.<sup>61</sup> Other descriptions do bear verbal similarities to the *Dominica* homily and the Pastoral Letter; compare the descriptions of anger:

*Dominica:*

Se feorða leahtor is weamet. þæt se man nage his modes geweald. ac buton ælcere foresceawunge. his yrsunge gefremað; Of ðam leahtre cymð. hream. and æbilignys. dyslic dyrstignys. and mansliht;<sup>62</sup>

Pastoral Letter:

Se fifta is Ira, þæt is weamodniss, þæt se mann ne mæge his mōd gewildan, ac būtan ælcum wisdome wāclice irsað and mannslihtas jefremað and fela reþnissa.<sup>63</sup>

*Sermo:*

Se feorða leahtor is ira. þæt is on englisc weamodnyss. seo deð þæt se man nah his modes geweald. and macað manslihtas. and mycele yfelu.<sup>64</sup>

(my italics).

Even when Alcuin (or Cassian) is the ultimate source, such as in the description of grief, the three lists are closer to each other than to the source.<sup>65</sup> Ælfric prefaces his passage on the vices in the *Sermo*, not with a discussion of the ten commandments, but with a definition of the three chief virtues: faith, hope and charity. This definition is also used to introduce similar material in the Vercelli III group of homilies, suggesting that this association was common.<sup>66</sup>

It is unlikely that Ælfric would repeat identical material on three separate occasions, but the parallels between these three lists enhances the probability that Ælfric is working with an established theme of vices and virtues, of which Alcuin's schema forms only a part. In the absence of direct sources for any of these lists by Ælfric, the similarities and the differences between the lists can be most readily explained by the fact that Ælfric was working from memory. The role of memory in Ælfric's methods of composition has been admirably discussed by Professor Cross:<sup>67</sup> new material used in the *Sermo* is traditional and common;

and verbal echoes between the three lists together with the association of the vices and virtues with the ten commandments or the three chief virtues all suggest the operation of memory.

The closest use of Alcuin's *De Virtutibus* by Ælfric remains his translation of the vices and *remedia* from cap. XXXIV in the *Dominica* homily.<sup>68</sup> The use of the same material by Wulfstan casts further doubt on the direct dissemination of this extract, as proposed by Förster. Wulfstan uses Alcuin's list in the process of adapting a Latin homily, *De Christianitate*, into the English, *Her Ongynþ be Cristendome*. The Latin homily contains a list of the vices taken from the Carolingian scholar Pirmin of Reichenau; when Wulfstan came to translate the Latin homily, he wished to add the eight complementary virtues. For these, he draws on his translation of Alcuin's list of vices and *remedia*, evidenced in one manuscript of the *Commonplace Book*, re-arranging the order of the virtues in the *De Virtutibus* to correspond with his own earlier list of the vices. This is a process of adaptation similar to that used by Ælfric. The English homily, *Her Ongynþ be Cristendome*, therefore, shows that Wulfstan knew Alcuin's convenient list of the vices and *remedia*; but this passage amounts to only a few sentences of Alcuin's work.<sup>69</sup> Wulfstan also associates the ten commandments with the vices and virtues, in a manner similar to Ælfric.<sup>70</sup> Even though Ælfric and Wulfstan often draw on similar material, the translation of this brief extract from Alcuin by both writers for their own purposes indicates that this Alcuinic passage had become thoroughly absorbed into an established tradition of the vices and virtues.

The problems of deciding how a Latin work relates to its apparent equivalent in Old English are thus of crucial importance to an understanding of the dissemination of Latin florilegia in Old English. Knowledge of a florilegium may be deduced either from the knowledge of an English manuscript tradition for the Latin work, or from its use by English writers. By their very nature, florilegia are liable to fragmentation, and this explains their popularity as reference works. It is their accessibility as convenient sources of popular material that makes direct source identification so difficult. The early fragmentation of Alcuin's *De Virtutibus* has been illustrated by a source analysis of the pre-Benedictine Revival homilies. Although these Old English homilies appear to be direct translations from Alcuin, they have, in fact, been transmitted indirectly. By the time of the Benedictine Revival, the tradition of the vices and virtues has become even more popular, and it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between individual contributions to the theme, such as the *De Virtutibus*, and the theme itself. A study of the dissemination of Alcuin's *De Virtutibus et Vitiis Liber* indicates the problems of source identification and transmission that must be faced when Old English popular themes are examined.<sup>71</sup>

NOTES

- 1 C.L. Smetana, "Aelfric and the Early Medieval Homiliary", *Traditio* 15 (1959) pp.163-204, and C.L. Smetana, "Aelfric and the Homiliary of Haymo of Halberstadt", *Traditio* 17 (1961) pp.457-69. Professor Cross offers an analysis of Smetana's findings in J.E. Cross, "Ælfric and the Medieval Homiliary - Objection and Contribution", *Scripta Minora Regiae Societatis Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis* 1961-2, 4 (Lund, 1963) pp.1-34.
- 2 R. McKitterick proposes convincingly that the upsurge of interest in florilegia forms part of the plan for the Christian education of the people propagated by Charlemagne and his advisers; R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms 789-895* (London, 1977) pp.155-84.
- 3 Wulfstan's *Commonplace Book*, however, differs from early florilegia by containing materials both spiritual and practical of specific interest to a bishop. See D. Bethurum, "Archbishop Wulfstan's *Commonplace Book*", *PMLA* 57 (1942) pp.916-29.
- 4 Alcuin's *De Virtutibus et Vitiis Liber*, PL 101.613-38. For a discussion of date and sources see L. Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: Studies in Carolingian History and Literature*, Cornell Studies in Classical Philology 32 (New York, 1959) pp.227-54. For the most recent survey of extant Latin manuscripts of the *De Virtutibus*, see P.E. Szarmach, "A Preliminary Handlist of Manuscripts Containing Alcuin's *Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis*", *Manuscripta* 25 (1981) pp.131-40. Chapter 20, "De Judicibus", of the *De Virtutibus* has been recently edited: *Eine Altenglische Übersetzung von Alcuins de Virtute et Vitiis*, Kap. 20, Münchener - Universitäts - Schriften. Texte und Untersuchungen für englischen Philologie, Band 7, ed. R. Torkar (Munich, 1981). All translations from the *De Virtutibus* are my own.
- 5 The Classical florilegia are discussed by McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms*, pp.162-3.
- 6 The term, *florilèges ascétiques*, is offered as one possible definition of Christian florilegia by H.M. Rochais, "Contribution à l'histoire des florilèges ascétiques du haut Moyen Age Latin", *Revue Bénédictine* 63 (1953) pp.246-91.
- 7 McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms*, pp.160-1.
- 8 For the association of florilegia with penitential literature, see M.W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins: An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature* (Michigan, 1952) pp.97-9. The most recent discussion of the penitentials is A.J. Frantzen, *The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1983); see especially pp.120-1.
- 9 Many Carolingian florilegia are dedicated to, or commissioned by, individuals enjoying a prominent role in secular society. Alcuin's *De Virtutibus* is dedicated to Wido, Margrave of the Marca Britanniae; PL 101.613.
- 10 Defensor's *Liber Scintillarum* is edited by H.M. Rochais, *Defensoris Locogiacensis Monachi, Liber Scintillarum*, CCSL 117 (Turnhout, 1957) pp.1-307. The manuscripts of the *Liber Scintillarum* are discussed by Rochais, "Les manuscrits du 'Liber Scintillarum'", *Scriptorium* 4 (1950) pp.294-309, and "Defensoriana", *Sacris Erudiri* 9 (1957) pp.199-264. The oldest manuscripts date from the end of the eighth century. For a preliminary list of

- the manuscripts of the *De Virtutibus* see Szarmach, n.4 above.
- 11 As Alcuin states in his dedicatory letter, PL 101.613.
- 12 Chapter 36 in Migne's edition is not original; see Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, p.244.
- 13 The most thorough discussion of the theme of the deadly sins, both the seven deadly sins of the Gregorian and the eight of the Cassianic tradition, is by Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, especially pp.67-110. Both traditions circulated in Anglo-Saxon England.
- 14 See Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp.236-46.
- 15 Rochais, "Contribution à l'histoire des florilèges ascétiques . . .", pp.251, 268, argues for the influence of Defensor on Alcuin. Wallach refutes this: see *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp.234-50.
- 16 Halitgar of Cambrai used Alcuin's definitions of the four cardinal virtues for his own penitential, and Hrabanus Maurus recombined chapters from Alcuin in the composition of his own homilies, for example. See Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp.248-9.
- 17 H. Gneuss notes the existence of one Latin manuscript of the *Liber Scintillarum* which has contacts with England in Cambridge, Clare College MS 30 (Kk. 5. 6.) (saec. XI med.): see Gneuss, "A Preliminary List of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1100", ASE 9 (1981) pp.1-60, Gneuss no.34. The *Liber* was also translated into English: see E.W. Rhodes, ed., *Defensor's Liber Scintillarum, With an Interlinear Anglo-Saxon Version Made Early in the Eleventh Century*, EETS OS 93 (London, 1889).
- 18 Cited from Gneuss, "A Preliminary List of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1100", nos. 389 and 783.
- 19 Cited from Szarmach, "A Preliminary Handlist of Manuscripts Containing Alcuin's *Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis*", p.133. The Cotton version is edited by Rubie D-N. Warner, *Early English Homilies from the Twelfth Century MS. Vespasian D XIV*, EETS OS 152 (London, 1917; repr. New York, 1971) pp.91-105; and by B. Assmann, "Übersetzung von Alcuins *De Virtutibus et Vitiis* Liber. Ad Widonem Comitem", *Anglia* 11 (1889) pp.371-91. The Cambridge version remains unedited and uncollated.
- 20 Cited from Szarmach, "A Preliminary Handlist of Manuscripts Containing Alcuin's *Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis*", p.133. Both chapters were edited by M. Förster, "Altenglische Predigtquellen II", *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 122 (1909) pp.256-61. Förster's edition indicates the confusion between florilegia and their sources by identifying "Be Durhwununge" as by Defensor; it is, in fact, taken directly from Alcuin.
- 21 Gneuss, "A Preliminary List of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1100", for example, nos. 41, 629, 698.
- 22 Gneuss, "A Preliminary List of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1100", for example, nos. 324 and 509. See also M. Lapidge and M. Herren, trans., *Aldhelm: The Prose Works* (London, 1979) p.2.
- 23 Vercelli X and Vercelli XXI; see P.E. Szarmach, ed., *Vercelli Homilies*

- IX-XXIII, Toronto Old English Series 5 (Toronto, Buffalo, London, 1981) p.11 and p.83; and Rogationtide Homily 10 in J. Bazire and J.E. Cross, ed., *Eleven Old English Rogationtide Homilies*, Toronto Old English Series 7 (Toronto, Buffalo, London, 1982) p.125, first identified by E. Raynes, "Unpublished Old English Homilies: Mainly from MSS. CCCC 188, Hatton 114, 115 and Junius 121, together with Vercelli IX", D.Phil. thesis (Oxford, 1955) pp.cxxv-vi. A recent article by L.R. McCord points to the existence of an *Ubi Sunt* motif in the florilegium of Pseudo-Basil. Whilst the *Ubi Sunt* motif in this florilegium may not be the source for the relevant section of Blickling Homily V, as McCord attempts to demonstrate, it testifies to the general availability and circulation of florilegia: L.R. McCord, "A Probable Source for the *Ubi Sunt* Passage in Blickling Homily V", *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 82 (1981) pp.360-1. The Old English version of the *Admonitio* by Pseudo-Basil is edited by H.W. Norman, *The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Hexameron of St. Basil . . . And the Anglo-Saxon Remains of St. Basil's Admonitio ad filium spiritualem* (London, 1848). See also J.E. Cross, "Ubi Sunt Passages in Old English: Sources and Relationships", *Vetenskaps - Societeten i Lund Årsbok* (1956) pp.25-44.
- <sup>24</sup> Vercelli XX is edited by Szarmach, *Vercelli Homilies IX-XXIII*, pp.77-82, especially 11.35-45 and 1.50 through G, 1.33, and by Bazire and Cross, *Eleven Old English Rogationtide Homilies*, pp.25-39, especially 11.35-54, 59-166. Both editions contain useful source summaries.
- <sup>25</sup> Vercelli III is edited by M. Förster, *Die Vercelli-Homilien I*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa. XII Band (Hamburg, 1932; repr. Darmstadt, 1964) pp.53-72, with a convenient summary of the sources on pp.71-2.
- <sup>26</sup> Rogationtide Homily 7 in Bazire and Cross, *Eleven Old English Rogationtide Homilies*, pp.90-100, especially 11.2-16.
- <sup>27</sup> M.R. Godden, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series Text*, EETS SS 5 (London, 1979) (hereafter *CH II*) pp.110-26, especially 11.476-557. D. Bethurum, ed., *The Homilies of Wulfstan* (Oxford, 1957) pp.200-10, especially 11.63-9.
- <sup>28</sup> Bazire and Cross, *Eleven Old English Rogationtide Homilies*, pp.25-6. As Bazire and Cross indicate, the recognition of the translator's Latinity suggests that he was not using the version of the *De Virtutibus* printed by Migne.
- <sup>29</sup> P.E. Szarmach, "The Vercelli Homilies: Style and Structure", in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. P.E. Szarmach and B.F. Huppé (Albany, New York, 1978) p.250.
- <sup>30</sup> J. Turville-Petre, "Translations of a Lost Penitential Homily", *Traditio* 19 (1963) p.56.
- <sup>31</sup> H.L. Spencer, "Vernacular and Latin Versions of a Sermon for Lent: 'A Lost Penitential Homily' Found", *Mediaeval Studies* 44 (1982) pp.271-305.
- <sup>32</sup> Förster, *Die Vercelli-Homilien I*, pp.71-2.
- <sup>33</sup> Turville-Peter, "Translations of a Lost Penitential Homily", pp.51-78.
- <sup>34</sup> Spencer, "Vernacular and Latin Versions of a Sermon for Lent . . .", pp.271-305.

<sup>35</sup> M.R. Godden, "Old English Composite Homilies from Winchester", ASE 4 (1975) pp.57-65.

<sup>36</sup> M. Förster, "Über die Quellen von Ælfrics exegetischen Homiliae Catholicae", *Anglia* 16 (1894) pp.46-8.

<sup>37</sup> PL 101.637.

<sup>38</sup> Godden, *CH II*, pp.125-6, 11.548-57.

<sup>39</sup> Noted by Förster, "Über die Quellen von Ælfrics exegetischen Homiliae Catholicae", p.47.

<sup>40</sup> See above p.175, and note 14.

<sup>41</sup> Gregory considers pride to be distinct from the other vices; see Gregory, *Moralia*, Lib. XXXI, cap. XLV, PL 76.620-1.

<sup>42</sup> The names of the sins listed by Cassian have been standardised for ease of reference; see Cassian, *Collatio V*, cap. II, PL 49.611:

Octo sunt principalia vitia, quae humanum infestant genus, id est, primum gastrimargia, quod sonat ventris ingluvies; secundum fornicatio; tertium philargyria, id est, avaritia, sive amor pecuniae; quartum ira; quintum tristitia; sextum acedia, id est, anxietas, sive taedium cordis; septimum cenodoxia, id est, jactantia, seu vana gloria; octavum superbia.

The Gregorian list is taken from the *Moralia*, PL 76.620-1; and Ælfric's list is taken from his first list of the vices, Godden, *CH II*, p.124, 11.483-6.

<sup>43</sup> See Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, pp.78-115.

<sup>44</sup> Godden, *CH II*, p.125, 11.536-9. See below for a further discussion of the position of pride in lists of the vices by Ælfric, p.181, note 55.

<sup>45</sup> Wulfstan's list reads, "gitsung 7 gifernes, galnes 7 weamodnys, unrotnys 7 asolcennys, gylpgeornys 7 ofermodignys"; Bethurum, *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, p.203, 11.63-5. Vercelli III lists *ziferne*, *dyrne-ze-lizre*, *sleac-modnes*, *unrotnes*, *zitsung*, *idel wuldor*, *aefest*, *irre*, *ofer-hy3d*; see Förster, *Die Vercelli-Homilien I*, p.55, 11.23-5. Theodulf lists *gastrimargia*, *fornicatio*, *acedia* sive *tristitia*, *avaritia*, *vana gloria*, *invidia*, *ira*, *superbia*; see A.S. Napier, ed., *The Old English Version, with the Latin Original, of the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang. An Old English Version, with the Latin Original, of the Capitula of Theodulf . . .*, EETS OS 150 (London, 1916) p.106, 11.8-13.

<sup>46</sup> Origen, Hom. XII, *In Librum Jesu Nave*, PG 12.886ff.; Cassian, *Collatio V*, cap. XVIII, PL 49.635; Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm: The Prose Works*, p.69.

<sup>47</sup> Compare Alcuin, PL 101.634:

Avaritia est nimia divitiarum acquirendi, habendi, vel tenendi cupiditas, quae pestis inexplabilis est:  
(Avarice is the desire of acquiring, having or keeping excessive riches, which sickness is insatiable.)

and Ælfric, Godden, *CH II*, p.124, 11.506-7:

. . . gitsung. se ontent symle ðæs mannes mod to maran ahte. and swa hé mare hæfð swa hé grædigra bið.

- <sup>48</sup> Godden, *CH II*, p.124, ll.499-500; Alcuin, PL 101.633.
- <sup>49</sup> Cassian, *Collatio V*, cap. IV, PL 49.612: "Nam nec primus Adam per gastrimargiam potuit decepti"; and Wulfstan, *Her Ongynþ be Cristendome*: "Ðurh gifernesse Adam forlet arest paradisum", Bethurum, *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, pp.203-4, ll.78-9.
- <sup>50</sup> Godden, *CH II*, p.125, ll.532-3; Alcuin, PL 101.630.
- <sup>51</sup> See, for example, Rochais, *Liber Scintillarum*, CCSL 117, cap. XVII, §25, p.78; and Pseudo-Alcuin, *Liber de Divinis*, cap. XIII, PL 101.1193, which appears to be based on Defensor.
- <sup>52</sup> The *Sermo* is edited by W.W. Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints I*, EETS OS 76, 82 (London, 1882, 1885; repr. as one vol. 1966) pp.354-62, ll.267-380. Later adaptations of this homily can be found in Rubie D-N. Warner, *Early English Homilies . . .* pp.16-19, and R. Morris, ed., *Old English Homilies and Homiletic Treatises . . . of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, EETS OS 29, 34 (London, 1867-8; repr. as one vol. 1973) pp.101-7. The Pastoral Letter is edited by B. Fehr, *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa. IX Band (Hamburg, 1914) pp.204-14, §§146-76. Clemoes discusses the dating of the *Sermo* and this letter, giving a convenient summary of Fehr's chronology for the letters, in P.A.M. Clemoes, "The Chronology of Ælfric's Works", in *The Anglo-Saxons: Studies in Some Aspects of their History and Culture presented to Bruce Dickens*, ed. P.A.M. Clemoes (London, 1959) pp.212-47.
- <sup>53</sup> As identified in Fehr's notes to his edition, pp.204-14.
- <sup>54</sup> The list of vices in the *Dominica* homily is taken from the same section of the homily as the earlier table, see above p.179, note 42. The list from the *Sermo* is taken from Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints I*, pp.354-9; and the list from the Pastoral Letter (Fehr III) is taken from Fehr, *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, pp.204-14, MS O. Where alternative Latin or English names are supplied for the vices in the *Sermo* and the Pastoral Letter, the most common word has been chosen for ease of reference.
- <sup>55</sup> Indeed, Pope and Clemoes use the position of pride in these lists, and other brief lists of the vices by Ælfric, in an attempt to date the composition of some of the Supplementary Homilies; see Clemoes, "The Chronology of Ælfric's Works", pp.225-7, and J.C. Pope, ed., *The Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection I*, EETS OS 259 (London, 1967) pp.284-5.
- <sup>56</sup> The Pastoral Letter gives a definition of the vice, its progeny and *remedia* in a manner reminiscent of Alcuin, but does not conclude with a list of vices and complementary *remedia*.
- <sup>57</sup> See Godden, *CH II*, pp.117-20; and Fehr, *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, pp.191-204. See also Clemoes, "The Chronology of Ælfric's Works", pp.241-2.
- <sup>58</sup> Godden, *CH II*, p.125, ll.531-5.
- <sup>59</sup> Fehr, *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, p.204, §§147-51, from MS O.
- <sup>60</sup> (i) Gluttony: *Dominica*, in Godden, *CH II*, p.124, ll.499-500 and p.125, ll. 548-9; Pastoral Letter, in Fehr, *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, p.206, §§154, 157. (ii) Avarice: *Dominica*, in Godden, p.124, ll.505-7 and p.125, l.553; Pastoral Letter, in Fehr, p.208, §§160, 161. (iii) Anger: see below p.182;



- cf. Alcuin, cap. XXVIII, XXX and XXXI, PL 101.633-4.
- <sup>61</sup> The description of fornication, Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints I*, p.356, ll.277-9, is similar to that found in Isidore, *Sententiae*, PL 83.642; and Defensor, in Rochais, *Liber Scintillarum*, CCSL 117, cap. XXI, §32. The description of avarice, Skeat, p.356, l.281, is ultimately based on I Tim. vi 10, and can also be found in Isidore, PL 83.646, §4.
- <sup>62</sup> Godden, *CH II*, p.124, ll.510-12.
- <sup>63</sup> *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, p.208, §162.
- <sup>64</sup> Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints I*, p.356, ll.286-8.
- <sup>65</sup> Compare Alcuin, cap. XXXIII, PL 101.635, with *Dominica*, Godden, *CH II*, pp.124-5, ll.514-19; the *Sermo*, Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints I*, p.356, ll.289-94; and the Pastoral Letter, Fehr, *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, pp.210-12, §§168-71.
- <sup>66</sup> See Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints I*, pp.352-4, ll.246-56; Turville-Petre, "Translations of a Lost Penitential Homily", pp.51-78; and Spencer, "Vernacular and Latin Versions of a Homily for Lent . . .", pp.271-305, especially p.283.
- <sup>67</sup> J.E. Cross, "The Literate Anglo-Saxon - On Sources and Disseminations" *Proceedings of the British Academy* 58 (1972) pp.86-93.
- <sup>68</sup> See above, p.178.
- <sup>69</sup> For a useful summary of Wulfstan's sources see Bethurum, *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, pp.328-9. Bethurum suggests that Wulfstan's translation of the vices and *remedia* from Alcuin indicates a full knowledge of the vices and virtues section of the *De Virtutibus*. This is not evidenced in the translation of *Her Ongynþ be Cristendome*; the only difference between Wulfstan and Alcuin's sentence in cap. XXXIV, given the re-arrangement of the order, is the pairing of *gitsung* with *rumbeornþys* where Alcuin reads *abstinentiam* (Bethurum, p.203, l.63 and l.68). It is interesting that Ælfric also departs from Alcuin in this section of his translation, see above, p.178.
- <sup>70</sup> See Bethurum, *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, pp.201-2, and above p.181.
- <sup>71</sup> I should like to thank Dr Joyce Hill for her stimulating discussions during the preparation of this paper. I should also like to acknowledge the help of the editors of this volume. Above all, I should like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Cross for his scholarly and attentive supervision of my work over the last three years.