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## Old English Made New: One Catholic Homily and its Reuses

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In his study of Old English texts which use Latin sources and influences, Martin Irvine notes that 'Old English texts set up an interpretative dialogue with prior texts'.<sup>1</sup> An Old English text which draws from vernacular rather than Latin sources may be performing cultural translations – of register, context and audience – and not linguistic ones, but the possibilities for interpretative dialogue with sources and influences are just as great. Concepts of and attitudes to source material, and adaptation of its ideas, are manifested in Old English texts which use Old English sources, and which themselves constitute documented instances of Anglo-Saxon reader-response.<sup>2</sup> Copies of Old English texts almost always show differences from the detail of the 'original', and no matter how small and apparently careless, such differences give access to the method and purpose of these reuses of vernacular materials, and allow speculation about the form in which earlier Old English texts were available to later compilers.

The homily for Palm Sunday which Ælfric composed for his first series of *Catholic Homilies*, 'In Dominica Palmarum', was widely circulated during the two centuries after its composition.<sup>3</sup> One copy of the homily survives in a fragmentary, damaged manuscript, and one has a single missing leaf, but it is generally assumed that these were complete copies of 'In Dominica Palmarum'.<sup>4</sup> Eight more complete versions survive in a range of manuscripts from the late tenth to the second half of the twelfth century, all of which contain a substantial selection of the *Catholic Homilies*, but only one of which reproduces both series in a form close to that in which Ælfric wrote them and intended them to be disseminated.<sup>5</sup> Even if only these complete copies of 'In Dominica Palmarum' are considered, then, it is clear that although they maintain the integrity of this homily, they variously resite it by not transmitting it in a complete and unbroken run of the *Catholic Homilies* series. The nature of the resiting varies: some of these manuscripts mix Ælfrician homilies with pieces by other authors; some include non-homiletic material; some reorder or restrict their coverage to supply material for part of the liturgical year, and so use 'In Dominica Palmarum',

and Ælfric, as one of their sources.<sup>6</sup>

Material from the *Catholic Homilies* is also resited in other ways. The transmission of freestanding excerpts from the *Catholic Homilies* is relatively common: approximately twenty-six such excerpts survive, copied into manuscripts without the rest of the homily, although none of these is an excerpt from 'In Dominica Palmarum'. The welding of *Catholic Homilies* excerpts with other material is also widespread: there survive approximately twenty-seven composite pieces which have excerpts from the *Catholic Homilies* as the source for some sentences or passages, and which embed these in other material which sometimes can be identified as coming from other Old English sources, and sometimes is assumed to be the work of the compiler of the composite piece.

As well as the complete copies of 'In Dominica Palmarum' described above, four more versions survive, all of which recontextualise Ælfric's homily radically, by using excerpts from it as a source for new composition in Old English. This unusually large group of rewritings of a single *Catholic Homily* is the focus of the following analysis.

**1. Oxford, Bodleian Hatton 114, article 49 and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 178, article 27.**

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 178 contains a range of homilies, including many by Ælfric, and The Rule of St Benedict in Latin and Old English. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 114 is a collection of homilies, many of which are by Ælfric, which also includes a translation of part of the pseudo-Matthew account of the birth of the Virgin Mary. Together with Hatton 113 it forms a single volume.

These first two examples of texts which reuse 'In Dominica Palmarum', folios 85v-86r of manuscript Bodleian Hatton 114, and page 229 of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 178, almost qualify as freestanding excerpts.<sup>7</sup> Both reuse two short excerpts from 'In Dominica Palmarum', and merely add to them a formulaic two-word introduction and a nine-word closing prayer. These small additions, however, transform their source by turning the 'In Dominica Palmarum' excerpts into a short, independent preaching text very unlike Ælfric's homily in tone and balance. The Hatton and Corpus versions of this text are identical in their main substance. They open with the words 'leofan men',<sup>8</sup> and then discuss Christ's justice in reclaiming humankind from the devil, comparing the devil to a fish which chokes to death on the hidden hook of Christ's divinity. This discussion is followed by a brief reference to the

Resurrection on Easter Sunday, to the fact that this feast is seven days away, and the comment that on that day it will be more fitting to say more about this. The piece closes with a formulaic 'þam si wuldor 7 lof a to worulde Amen'.<sup>9</sup>

The whole of the centre of this piece is taken from 'In Dominica Palmarum', and corresponds to two excerpts from more than three-quarters of the way through the Ælfric homily, which together account for less than one-fourteenth of its total.<sup>10</sup> The compiler of the Hatton and Corpus pieces has used neither Ælfric's opening narration and explanation of the Palm Sunday story of Christ's entry into Jerusalem and of the devil instigating the Jews to kill him; nor the account of Christ's passion, death, burial and Harrowing of Hell, which follow the devil – fish comparison in 'In Dominica Palmarum'; nor Ælfric's closing description of the blessing of the palms and its significance, and explanations that the sinful will pass into torment and the righteous to eternal life, and that the soul and the body will be reunited at Judgement.

A particularly striking feature of the *Catholic Homilies* material reused in the Hatton and Corpus pieces is its non-narrative nature. Most composite Ælfric/anonymous texts choose passages from the *Catholic Homilies* made up of relatively straightforward, well-structured narrative which, although not representative of his tendency to weight any storytelling with careful meditation on and explanation of its theological significance, does at least preserve Ælfric's characteristic clarity of expression. The image of the devil as the fish swallowing a hook is extremely striking, but quite uncharacteristic of Ælfric's overall narrative and exegetical content. Gregory uses the hooking of an animal as a metaphor for the work of the Church, but it is clear from their wording that the Hatton and Corpus pieces have Ælfric's rendering of it as their source.<sup>11</sup> The simile works thematically in the Hatton and Corpus pieces as a powerful central image for the discussion of the nature and threat of the devil, which is not integrated into a discussion of the events of the week before Easter.

Another way to examine how the Ælfrician source material is being resited is to examine its immediate manuscript context. Both Hatton 114 and Corpus 178 have a copy of the Palm Sunday homily from the second series of *Catholic Homilies* immediately before this piece.<sup>12</sup> The composite homily has no separate rubric in either manuscript, but it is marked out in both as a new text, opening on a new line with a large initial letter after the final 'Amen' of the *Catholic Homilies* II Palm Sunday homily. In both Hatton 114 and Corpus 178, after the final 'Amen' of the composite piece, Ælfric's 'Silent Days' notice from *Catholic Homilies* I stating that Church customs forbid the preaching of any sermon on the three days before Easter Sunday is copied, and the next, new homily is the First Series Catholic Homily for Easter

Sunday.<sup>13</sup> Despite the siting of this homily in the manuscript, its focus on the power of Christ and the downfall of the devil, the omission of all of Ælfric's references to Palm Sunday, and the closing remarks about Easter Sunday link it more strongly by subject-matter to the Easter homily which follows it than to Palm Sunday, the feast which is the subject of the homily which precedes it in both manuscripts, and of the homily which is its source.

The similarities between Hatton 114 and Corpus 178's reuse of this Catholic Homily can be explained. Hatton 114 was written in the third quarter of the eleventh century in Worcester and, although the place of writing of Corpus 178, in the first half of the eleventh century, is not certain, it is known to have been in Worcester during the eleventh century.<sup>14</sup> John Pope believes that Corpus 178 may be the exemplar of Hatton 114, and this would neatly account for the presence in both manuscripts of the almost identical reuses of 'In Dominica Palmarum'.<sup>15</sup>

Whilst the main text in both manuscripts is identical, their margins reveal interesting divergences. It is well known that reader-response to Ælfric's 'Silent Days' notice was unfavourable, and Hatton 114 and Corpus 178 each bear witness to this in the form of comments added in their margins which have no counterpart in any other surviving manuscripts. The marginal comment in Hatton 114 is brief: 'Dis nis no well gesæd'.<sup>16</sup> Corpus 178 has a longer marginal protest which is signed by Coleman, whom Ker speculates might be the author known to have been chancellor to St Wulfstan in 1089.<sup>17</sup> Joyce Hill believes that the marginal note in Hatton 114 is also probably by Coleman.<sup>18</sup> These marginal notes are a very concrete form of reader-response: a reader of, and presumably a preacher from, these manuscript copies of *Catholic Homilies* is entering into a written dialogue with them. The other surviving responses to Ælfric's 'Silent Days' notice are more pragmatic but less explicit, containing neither Ælfric's 'Silent Days' notice nor any objecting comments, but supplying non-Ælfrician homilies for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.<sup>19</sup>

Despite their differences in wording, both of these marginal comments attest to the same basic response to Ælfric's words. A more significant difference in liturgical terms between the margins of the Hatton and Corpus pieces is in the form of a marginal note earlier in the Hatton piece, which has no counterpart in the Corpus one. After the words 'easterlican sunnandæg þe nu' at the end of line 4 of Hatton 114 folio 86r,<sup>20</sup> the words 'todæg is 7' have been added in the margin in a hand not dissimilar to that of the main text.<sup>21</sup> This addition makes sense as a continuation of line 4, but utterly contradicts the immediately following words at the beginning of line 5: 'bið on seofon nihton'.<sup>22</sup> The marginal words might be an incomplete attempt to reassign the

liturgical context of the piece from Palm Sunday to Easter Day, to weld it to the following homily in the manuscript. To make this reassigning complete, the opening words of line 5 would need to be erased, but there is no sign of this in the manuscript. Perhaps the marginal annotator was interrupted before finishing marking up line 5 so that this item could be used, or copied with the alterations incorporated into the main text, as an Easter Day preaching text. If so, what survives is an incomplete attempt to translate the context of the piece.

## 2. *Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 121, article 33.*

The two-volume homiliary Hatton 113 and 114 was probably intended as a continuation of manuscript Bodleian Junius 121.<sup>23</sup> Junius 121, also written in Worcester in the third quarter of the eleventh century, contains ecclesiastical institutes, penitentials, two of Ælfric's letters and some of his homilies. On folios 148v-54v of Junius 121 is a composite homily which uses the 'In Dominica Palmarum' devil-as-fish simile also copied in the Hatton and Corpus pieces,<sup>24</sup> but no other excerpts from this Ælfric homily.<sup>25</sup>

Junius 121 article 33 has no manuscript rubric, but a note in the margin in a later hand than that of the homily reads 'De descensu Christi ad inferos'.<sup>26</sup> Material resembling part of Blickling Homily VII is also used in article 33,<sup>27</sup> but the bulk of the homily is unsourced, and consists of two lengthy passages, one of which comprises its opening two fifths,<sup>28</sup> and one short one which is assumed to be the work of the anonymous compiler. The homily begins by announcing that the Gospel of the Resurrection has been read, and that the audience will now be told of Christ's descent into hell, binding of the devil and release of the chosen people. It then gives a brief account of the devil's influence over Adam and Eve and Herod, quoting at length a speech made by Herod to his companions. The crucifixion is analysed in terms of Christ's hidden divinity and the devil's mistake in thinking himself victorious. Christ is quoted offering the legalistic opinion that the person who damages another's goods forfeits his own. This is used as a dramatic explanation for the devil's fall from power, and the idea of Christ's victory is reinforced with the scriptural quotation 'Si exaltus fuero a terra[m] omnia traham ad me ipsum' (John 12. 32-33),<sup>29</sup> which is translated into Old English as 'Gif þæt gelimpð þæt ic beo on rode up ahafen, þonne teo ic ealle þing to me'.<sup>30</sup> The Junius homily then discusses Christ's role as ruler of creation, liberator of humans and defeater of evil spirits. Two more Biblical quotations, from Psalm 90, are given in Latin and translated, the latter of which describes Christ

subjugating the lion and the dragon. This lengthy compiler-written section ends with an extension of the reference to the lion and the dragon into similes for the devil and his treatment of humans. At this point the scene switches to hell and in the last compiler-written sentence of this section, the spirits are described witnessing Christ's arrival.<sup>31</sup> The next two-fifths of article 33 are taken up with a very vivid account of the Harrowing of Hell.<sup>32</sup> Using much dramatic direct speech, the homily relates the fear of the evil spirits, the joy of the good souls and Christ's release of the good souls and of Adam and Eve. This section seems to have links with part of Blickling VII. The Junius homily makes no use of the beginning of Blickling VII, which focuses on Easter, Judgement Day, and the Crucifixion, or of the latter half of Blickling VII with its dramatic account, based on the *Apocalypse of Thomas*, of the signs of the last days of the world. Blickling VII's account of the Harrowing of Hell, however, is very close to that of the Junius homily. Pope states that the relevant section of the Junius homily is an adaptation of pages 85-89 of Blickling VII in Morris's edition,<sup>33</sup> and Scragg notes that 'the verbal echoes are sufficient to indicate descent from a common source rather than independent translation'.<sup>34</sup> Anna Maria Luiselli Fadda, however, does not think that the compiler of the Junius homily draws directly upon the text represented by Blickling VII.<sup>35</sup> She shows that Blickling VII is closer to the section on the Harrowing of Hell in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, and that the Junius homily is an amplified and modified version of the narrative, and suggests that the Junius homily and Blickling VII descend from an apocryphal text via a shared lost intermediate source. Mary Clayton also believes that the Junius homily does not represent a reworking of Blickling VII, and states that each text 'seems to have been translated independently from similar Latin material'.<sup>36</sup> The Junius homily's account of the Harrowing of Hell covers much the same ground as that of Blickling VII, in the same order, but at various points offers either a longer, shorter or modified version of the narrative. The opening sentences of both versions give an indication of the degree of divergence evident throughout the two accounts. The Junius homily reads: 'Pa wæron þa earman gastas swyðe afyrhte and abregde and þus cwædon: "Hwanon is ðes beorhta and þes leohta and þes stranga middaneard? Syððan he wæs us underþeod næfre ær he us þyllic gafol ne gegeald, ne us næfre ær þyllic[e] lac hyder ne onsende . . ."',<sup>37</sup> whilst Blickling VII reads: 'Hwonon is þes þus strang, & þus beorht, & þus egesfull? Se middangeard þe us wæs lange ær underþeoded, & us deap mycel gafol geald; ne gelomp hit na ær þæt us swylc deap geendod wære, ne us næfre swylc ege ne wearþ ær to helle geendebyrded . . .'.<sup>38</sup> These two versions can most easily be seen as descending independently from a common source. The Junius homily's version contains all the more dramatic details of Blickling VII's, except in its account of Eve

pleading to be released from hell. In both homilies Eve makes reference to her kinship with the Virgin Mary, but Eve's striking reference in Blickling VII to the Virgin Mary as her daughter is absent from the Junius homily.<sup>39</sup> The Junius homily's account of the Harrowing of Hell is followed by a compiler-written summary of the events described.<sup>40</sup> The homily next offers further analysis of the devil's actions through the Ælfrician devil-fish simile. The last section of the Junius homily is compiler-written, and returns to Christ leaving bad people in hell.<sup>41</sup> Christ's role as witness to the victory over death is explained, and the Ascension is presented as the ultimate manifestation of his glory.

By far the most striking section of the Junius homily is its Blickling-related central account of the Harrowing of Hell. The dramatic impact of the Junius homily is weakened by the long lead-in to this account and reiteration of some of its elements in the later parts. The compiler of the Junius homily seems especially interested in the devil, and repeatedly offers descriptions or interpretations of his role and actions. The predominantly interpretative earlier section of Ælfric's 'In Dominica Palmarum' is not used here, and the compiler links the devil-as-fish simile with the opening anonymous section of the Junius homily through the devil/lion and devil/dragon similes used there. Ælfric's account of the Harrowing of Hell from 'In Dominica Palmarum' is also rejected; the *Catholic Homilies*, for this compiler, seem to offer nothing more than a convenient, concise and striking addition to a discussion of the devil.

The question of textual availability is raised by the use of the Blickling-related version of the Harrowing of Hell, and not the 'In Dominica Palmarum' account, in the Junius homily. The compiler might have made a choice between the Blickling and Ælfric accounts, or the whole of 'In Dominica Palmarum' might not have been available. The radical nature, from Ælfric's point of view at least, of the recontextualisation of the 'In Dominica Palmarum' excerpt here, can be described in several ways: the small excerpt used here has been taken completely out of its context in the Catholic Homily and sited in a piece which looks as if it is intended for preaching on Easter Day; it is, as already noted, not at all typical of Ælfric; and it is mixed with material related to Blickling Homily VII – just the sort of dramatic, apocrypha-linked piece Ælfric so often disapproved of. Moreover, it is in a set of manuscripts which also contains a translation of part of the pseudo-Matthew account of the birth of the Virgin Mary.<sup>42</sup> As such, the use of *Catholic Homilies* material in the Junius homily flouts just about every aspect of Ælfric's instructions for the transmission of his work, and shows a homily compiler responding to 'In Dominica Palmarum' – or to an excerpt from it – as a convenient, striking and portable addition to its exploration of a theme. Of course, since Ælfric's instructions, as expressed in



the final prayer of the *Catholic Homilies*, were not transmitted as widely as other parts of the collection, many compilers would have had no way of knowing that they existed.

3. *London, Lambeth Palace 487, article 11.*<sup>43</sup>

Lambeth Palace 487 is a collection of homiletic and private devotional pieces which show a mixture of themes and sensibilities common in Old and Middle English texts. It was written at the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century, possibly at or near Worcester, and reuses material by Ælfric in three of its items.

The earliest surviving copies of the *Catholic Homilies* predate Lambeth 487 by two hundred years, so on comparing Lambeth homily 11 with the published edition of the First Series of *Catholic Homilies*, which is based on a late tenth- to early eleventh-century manuscript, it would be reasonable to expect to find linguistic updating of the text to make it understandable to a late twelfth- to early thirteenth-century audience. This is indeed what we find on examining the language of Lambeth homily 11 for the fifth Sunday in Lent.

Item 11, on folios 45r-47r, has no manuscript rubric. It opens with a general introduction to the feast of the Passion and discussion of Christ's reason for undergoing suffering on mankind's behalf. The fact that Christ was justified in taking mankind from the devil's power is emphasised, and it is at this point that the Lambeth homily begins to reuse 'In Dominica Palmarum', several phrases earlier than the other three composite pieces. The compiler of the Lambeth homily takes over Ælfric's insistence that Christ did not force the Jewish people to have him killed, alters 'Iudeisce'<sup>44</sup> to 'heðene'<sup>45</sup> and then continues to follow Ælfric's text for its devil-as-fish simile.<sup>46</sup>

The Lambeth homily summarises Ælfric's subsequent account of the Passion, Crucifixion and burial, which takes up ten lines of the printed edition of the homily, with a single compiler-written phrase, 'þe ferde to helle'.<sup>47</sup> It then returns to 'In Dominica Palmarum' for a second excerpt. This begins with an account of Christ binding the devil and freeing Adam and Eve from hell, and ends with a reminder that the devil felt the hook at this point, and the reference, also used in the Hatton and Corpus pieces, to the Resurrection on Easter Sunday.<sup>48</sup> Homily 11 follows its *Catholic Homilies* excerpt, which ends in mid-sentence, with a lengthy unsourced concluding section concerning the importance of doing God's works and helping others.

The first extract reused from 'In Dominica Palmarum' opens with 'þah',<sup>49</sup> and in the middle of a sentence in the Lambeth version, and closes at the end of an Ælfrician clause, but before the end of the sentence in which Ælfric describes the devil choking and losing control of Christians; the second opens in the middle of one sentence with 'and', and closes in the middle of another, with the reference to Easter Day being fourteen nights away, but before Ælfric's statement that it will be more fitting to speak of the Resurrection then, and it is welded into the middle of Lambeth sentences at its beginning and end. This much smoother transition into and out of the Ælfric excerpts, and the fluidity of their verbal alteration, are striking characteristics of the Lambeth homily.

The two passages from 'In Dominica Palmarum' are altered in many ways in the Lambeth homily. Apart from the 'Jewish' to 'heathen' switch, there are many other alterations of vocabulary, as exemplified by the following passages:

Lambeth 487

he nolde niman moncun nedunga of ðan deofle butan he hit  
forgulte. ac he hit forgulte eteliche þa þe he tuhte and spuhte þet  
folc . . .<sup>50</sup>

'In Dominica Palmarum'

he nolde niman mancyn neadunga of ðam deofle, buton he hit  
forwyrhte. He hit forwyrhte ðaða he tihte þæt folc . . .<sup>51</sup>

The first example of alterations to Ælfrician text in the Lambeth homily in the above passage includes the sort of lexical substitution one might expect to see in comparing 'In Dominica Palmarum' with the Lambeth homily: the latter has 'forgulte' for the earlier version's 'forwyrhte'. The other differences between these two excerpts, however, are harder to explain in terms of rendering the homily more easily comprehensible to a twelfth- or thirteenth-century audience. For example, the Lambeth version adds 'etelice' after 'forgulte' and 'and spuhte' after 'tuhte'. The former of these additions simply intensifies the description of the devil's sin and resembles the sort of casual-looking expansions found in other variant copies of Ælfrician texts; the latter turns Ælfric's one verb into a rhyming synonymic couplet. Both of these additions are possible signs that the compiler of the Lambeth homily is using the Ælfrician source from memory, with the capacity to reproduce its verbal detail very accurately, but in a sufficiently relaxed manner to improvise in the ways seen in this first excerpt, which lend the Lambeth homily a more conversational, oral tone.<sup>52</sup>

Alterations to vocabulary with a different effect are seen in one further passage:

Lambeth 487

þa ifelde þe deofel þene hoc. þe he er gredlice forsweahl for ure drihten aras of deaðe on þene sunnen dei þe we hateð easter dei. þe nu bið to dei on fowertene niht.<sup>53</sup>

'In Dominica Palmarum'

Pa gefredde se deofol þone angel þe he ær grædelice forsweahl. And Crist aras of deaðe on þone easterlican sunnan-dæg, þe nu bið on seofon nihtum<sup>54</sup>

This second passage also features what looks like lexical updating: the Lambeth homily has 'ifelde' for the earlier version's 'gefredde', and 'hoc' for 'angel'. The other differences between the two versions are more unusual. In turning Ælfric's 'And Crist aras' into 'for ure drihten aras', the Lambeth homily makes lexical substitutions which do not alter the sense of the passage, but in restructuring its syntax it also alters its emphasis: whilst Ælfric simply juxtaposes the devil feeling the hook which he has swallowed and Christ rising from death on Easter Sunday, the compiler of the Lambeth homily turns the hooking of the devil into the explicit cause of the resurrection, and thus foregrounds the resurrection as the event which seals the devil's fate.

On two occasions the compiler of the Lambeth homily expands rather than alters the Ælfrician text, by adding the following two passages:

- i and þe deofel ablende heore heortan þet heo ne cunnan icnawen ure helend þe wes imong heom. *Quia si principes mundi huius Christum cognouissent nunquam illum crucifixissent.* Ðet is to seggane. Gif þa hefdmen of þissere worlde hefden icnawen crist; nefden heo nefre ifestned hine on rode for ure hele.<sup>55</sup>
- ii Ne nom he na alle þa þe þer inne weren ah ane dale als wa me bit of ane epple; for hit wes awriten þurh þan prophete. *O mors ero mors tua morsus tuus ero inferne.* þet is. Ðu deað ic wulle beon þin deð ; and þu helle ic wulle beon þin bite.<sup>56</sup>

The first of these comes just two and a half lines after the Lambeth homily begins

using 'In Dominica Palmarum' and adds a reference to the devil blinding the hearts of the 'heathens' who put Christ to death; the latter provides another eating simile, this time in relation to Christ's selection of souls during the Harrowing of Hell. Latin biblical quotations are also used in the anonymous sections which surround the Ælfric excerpt in the Lambeth homily, and so these two passages inserted into it give the homily a degree of uniformity of register. All of the Latin biblical quotations in the Lambeth homily are highlighted for a reader of the homily by being written in red ink.

The Lambeth homily also engages in rubric shifting. The final alteration it makes to the Ælfric text concerns how long it is until Easter, where it substitutes 'þe nu bið to dei on feowertene niht'<sup>57</sup> for Ælfric's 'þe nu bið on seofon nihtum'. This is a deliberate revision of the relationship to Easter Sunday of the homily being preached, and alters its rubric from Palm Sunday to the Fifth Sunday in Lent.

The ways in which the Lambeth homily rewrites its Ælfrician source seem contradictory in terms of register. The many casual-looking expansions and substitutions have the effect of rendering 'In Dominica Palmarum' more explicit and making the explanation of some points more simplistic through the addition of emphasis and repetition. This sort of simplifying, generalising transformation, typical of many rewritings of *Catholic Homilies* material, usually serves as a radical stylistic recontextualisation into the anonymous homiletic tradition and is often interpreted as a sign that *Catholic Homilies* material is being adapted for a less learned audience. The Latin quotations in the Lambeth homily are all familiar biblical snippets, but their use here would seem to give an indication about the type of context for which this rewriting of Ælfric is intended, which contradicts the notion of a less learned audience. It is very unusual to find Latin introduced into Ælfric/anonymous composite homilies,<sup>58</sup> and its occurrence here raises interesting questions about the intended audience of this homily and of the whole of Lambeth 487.

If these four manuscripts which contain adapted excerpts from 'In Dominica Palmarum' were all produced in Worcester, or in a centre linked to it, then what they seem to provide is a series of snapshots of the availability of and attitude to Ælfric as source in a single locality across time. This, however, involves the construction of two hypotheses which are commonly implied in studies of textual transmission but often not acknowledged. The first is that each of these pieces was composed for the manuscript in which it survives, when in fact the surviving versions may be derived from earlier copies in which the Ælfric material was already adapted. The second is that the compilers of each of these composite pieces had access to a complete copy of 'In Dominica Palmarum' and deliberately omitted or altered sections of it. As the

discussion above has made clear, the surviving evidence does not easily support the latter hypothesis, and the former is also shown by manuscript survival to be invalid, since the Hatton and Corpus pieces cannot be independent, identical reworkings of 'In Dominica Palmarum'.

If the sequence of composition of the four surviving reworkings can be used as a framework, a scenario of textual availability and scribal choice may be sketched out. Perhaps in the eleventh century, a freestanding excerpt, not yet tailored into a homily, which corresponded to the two excerpts from 'In Dominica Palmarum' used in the Hatton and Corpus pieces was in circulation. This was transformed into a homily by the compiler or the immediate exemplar of the Corpus piece, then this new homily was copied in Worcester by the Hatton compiler. The compiler of the Junius composite homily could well have derived its 'In Dominica Palmarum' passage from the same freestanding excerpt, or from the Hatton or Corpus piece, but using only the devil-as-fish section, since the comment on the Resurrection did not fit the theme or occasion of the Junius homily. It is unlikely that the compilers of these pieces knew that Ælfric was their source; the material which they reuse must have seemed to them to be simply a convenient and striking explication of the power of Christ over the devil, rather than an excerpt from a text with a known authorial identity.

The compiler of the Lambeth homily, by contrast, must have had access to more, if not all, of the Ælfric piece.<sup>59</sup> The passages from 'In Dominica Palmarum' adapted here are, as has been discussed, much less easily separable from their Ælfrician context than those used in the first three examples. The remarkably smooth transition into and out of the Ælfric excerpts in the Lambeth homily, and the fluidity of their verbal alteration raise the possibility that the compiler of the Lambeth homily had access to a complete copy of 'In Dominica Palmarum', but in the form of a closely memorised, rather than a written, account which was then deliberately reworded to fit the new composite homily.

What it is not possible to determine, of course, is whether its reuse in these four pieces implies that the whole of 'In Dominica Palmarum' was not available in Worcester until the twelfth century, or simply that the compilers of the first three pieces chose to use a freestanding excerpt, which was perhaps identified or catalogued – in a library or in their memories – as a passage on the devil and the power of Christ, rather than to trawl the whole homily for material, or whether in fact manuscript survival has led us to distort the real sequence of the composition of the four pieces discussed here.

What all of these adaptations of 'In Dominica Palmarum' have in common is a recognition of the power of the devil-as-fish simile, and an apparent ignorance of, or

disregard for, Ælfric's instructions for the intact transmission of his work. The interpretative dialogue to which these four pieces bear witness shows that Ælfric as source is clearly attractive to the wider homiletic traditions, although, as far as we can glean from the surviving evidence, that attractiveness is nothing to do with any authority his name may have carried, nor with the nuances of his interpretations of Christian teachings and Reform orthodoxies. Ælfric's desire for his work to be transmitted unaltered was thwarted for two reasons: the omission of his instructions for their reproduction from many of the copies of the *Catholic Homilies*, and the common practice of reworking sources and influences to make new texts.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Martin Irvine, 'Medieval Textuality and the Archaeology of Textual Culture', in *Speaking Two Languages. Traditional Disciplines and Contemporary Theory in Medieval Studies*, ed. by Allen J. Frantzen (Albany, 1991), pp. 181-210 (p. 187).

<sup>2</sup> In 'Source, method, theory, practice: on reading two Old English verse texts', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 76 (1994), 5-73, Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe offers some illuminating reflections on the relationship between source and product (or, to use her suggested term, 'target' (p. 58)) texts.

<sup>3</sup> This homily is edited from manuscript Cambridge, University Library, Gg. 3. 28 in Benjamin Thorpe, ed., *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church. The First Part, containing the Sermones Catholici, or Homilies of Ælfric*, 2 vols (London, 1844-46), I, 206-18.

<sup>4</sup> The fragmentary, damaged copy of 'In Dominica Palmarum' is in the Marie-Louise and James M. Osborn Collection in the Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven. For a full description and facsimile, see R. L. Collins and P. Clemoes, 'The Common Origin of Ælfric Fragments at New Haven, Oxford, Cambridge, and Bloomington', in *Old English Studies in Honour of John C. Pope*, ed. by Robert Burlin and Edward B. Irving, Jr. (Toronto, 1974), pp. 285-326. The copy of 'In Dominica Palmarum' with a missing leaf is London, British Library Cotton Faustina A. ix, article 21. Article numbers for this and other manuscripts referred to are taken from N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957; reissued with supplement, 1990).

<sup>5</sup> The nine complete versions are manuscripts Cambridge, University Library Gg. 3. 28, article 16; London, British Library Royal 7 C. xii, article 14; London, British Library Cotton Vitellius C. v, article 19; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 188, article 15; Oxford, Bodleian Library Bodley 343, article 38; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303, article 14; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 302, article 25; and Cambridge, University Library Ii. 4. 6, article 18. Of the nine manuscripts listed above, only Cambridge, University Library Gg. 3. 28 includes all of the First and Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*, with their Latin and Old English prefaces and final prayer, as Ælfric intended them to be transmitted, but even this manuscript contains extra material by Ælfric.

<sup>6</sup> Manuscripts Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 343; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303 and 302; Cambridge, University Library Ii. 4. 6; and London, British Library, Cotton Faustina A. ix also include pieces not by Ælfric. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303 and 302 include non-homiletic texts. Cambridge, University Library Ii. 4. 6 and London, British Library, Cotton Faustina A. ix both begin imperfectly, and now contain homilies for the portion of the liturgical year from Epiphany to Pentecost. It is

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generally agreed that in their complete state neither of these homiliaries covered the whole year.

<sup>7</sup> Neither of these two texts has been edited for publication. A transcription of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 178 article 27 is included in my unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 'Ælfric as Source: the dissemination of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* from the late tenth to twelfth centuries' (University of Leeds, 1993), pp. 307-08.

<sup>8</sup> 'Dearly beloved'. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from Old English and Latin are my own.

<sup>9</sup> 'To him be glory and praise to all eternity. Amen'.

<sup>10</sup> Thorpe, *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I, 216, lines 4-17 and 32-34.

<sup>11</sup> Gregory, *Moralia in Job (Libri XXIII-XXXV)*, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina CXLIIIB, ed. by Marci Adriaen (Turnhout, 1985), XXXIII, 34.1, pp. 1704-05.

<sup>12</sup> On folios 75v-85v of Hatton 114, and pages 217-29 of Corpus Christi College 178.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of the 'Silent Days' notice, see Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric's "Silent Days"', *Leeds Studies in English*, ns 16 (1985), 118-31.

<sup>14</sup> The date and origin of this and all other manuscripts are taken from Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts*.

<sup>15</sup> John C. Pope, ed., *Homilies of Ælfric. A Supplementary Collection*, EETS, os 259, 2 vols (London, 1967), I, p. 76.

<sup>16</sup> 'This is not at all well said'.

<sup>17</sup> For the full text of Corpus 178's comment, see Hill, 'Ælfric's "Silent Days"', p. 121. Ker's identification of Coleman is made in 'Old English Notes Signed "Coleman"', *Medium Ævum*, 18 (1949), 29-31 (pp. 30-31).

<sup>18</sup> Hill, 'Ælfric's "Silent Days"', p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> For details, see Hill, 'Ælfric's "Silent Days"', p. 120.

<sup>20</sup> 'Easter Sunday which now'.

<sup>21</sup> 'is today and'.

<sup>22</sup> 'is seven nights away'.

<sup>23</sup> See Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts*, p. 391.

<sup>24</sup> Thorpe, *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I, 216, lines 4-17.

<sup>25</sup> This homily is edited by Anna Maria Luiselli Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos": una inedita omelia anglosassone', *Studi Medievali*, 13 (1972), 989-1011.

<sup>26</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos"', p. 989.

<sup>27</sup> Blickling VII is edited by R. Morris, *The Blickling Homilies*, EETS, os 58, 63 and 73 (London, 1874, 1876, 1880; reprinted as one volume, 1967), pp. 83-97.



<sup>28</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", p. 998, line 1 - p. 1002, line 81 'Nu . . . ende'.

<sup>29</sup> 'If I am raised from the earth I will draw everything to myself'.

<sup>30</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", p. 1000, lines 56-57, 'if it happens that I am raised up on a cross, then I will draw all things to me'.

<sup>31</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", p. 1002, lines 79-81 'Da . . . ende'.

<sup>32</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", p. 1002, line 81 - p. 1008, line 160 'Pa . . . worulde'.

<sup>33</sup> Pope, *Supplementary Collection*, I, 73 note 2.

<sup>34</sup> Scragg, 'Corpus of vernacular homilies', p. 255.

<sup>35</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", pp. 990-92.

<sup>36</sup> Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 2 (Cambridge, 1990), p. 256.

<sup>37</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", p. 1002, lines 81-84, 'Then the wretched spirits were so afraid and changed, and they said thus: "Whence is this bright and this light and this strange earth? When he was subject to us never before did he such tribute to us nor never before sent such an offering hither".'

<sup>38</sup> Morris, *The Blickling Homilies*, p. 85, lines 10-14, 'Whence is this man thus strong, thus glorious, and thus terrible? The world was long previously subject to us, and death yielded to us much tribute. Never before has it happened to us that death has thus been put an end to, nor ever before has such terror befallen to us and to hell'. (Morris' translation, *The Blickling Homilies*, p. 84, lines 9-13.)

<sup>39</sup> The Blickling reference is Morris, *The Blickling Homilies*, p. 88, line 20, 'minre dehter', 'my daughter'.

<sup>40</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", p. 1008, lines 161-64 'Pa . . . hæfde'.

<sup>41</sup> Fadda, "'De descensu Christi ad inferos'", p. 1008, line 177 - p. 1010, line 206 'Ne . . . amen'.

<sup>42</sup> This text is in Hatton 114 article 72. For a discussion of Ælfric's attitude to this legend, see Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary*, pp. 244-48.

<sup>43</sup> Lambeth Palace manuscript 487 is not included in Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts*, because of its late date. It is edited by Richard Morris, *Old English Homilies and Homiletic Treatises of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, EETS, os 29, 34 (London, 1867-68), pp. 119-125, and its article number taken from Morris' edition.

<sup>44</sup> Thorpe, *Homilies of Ælfric*, I, 216, line 1 'Jewish'.

<sup>45</sup> Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 121, line 32 'heathen'. Despite its description of the Passion and its discussion of human responsibility for Christ's death, there are no references to Jews in the Lambeth homily.

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<sup>46</sup> This first 'In Dominica Palmarum' excerpt begins at Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 121, line 32 and ends at p. 123, line 14 'pah . . . godcumnesse'. It corresponds to Thorpe, *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I, 214 line 35 - 216 line 16.

<sup>47</sup> 'he went to hell'. Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 123 line 14.

<sup>48</sup> This passage is Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 123, lines 14-24 'and . . . niht'; corresponding to Thorpe, *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I, 216 lines 28-33.

<sup>49</sup> 'however'.

<sup>50</sup> Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 123, lines 4-6 'he would not have taken mankind by force out of the devil's power, unless he (the devil) had been guilty; but he grievously sinned when he incited and beguiled the folk' (translation Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 122, lines 4-6).

<sup>51</sup> Thorpe, *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I, 216, lines 5-7 'he would not forcibly have taken mankind from the devil, unless he had forfeited them. He forfeited them when he instigated the people' (translation Thorpe, *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I, 217, lines 5-7).

<sup>52</sup> For further discussion of possible indicators of texts reproduced from memory, see my 'Memorialised Readings: Manuscript Evidence for Old English Homily Composition', in *Studies in Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts and Their Heritage, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries*, ed. by Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine Treharne (Scolar Press, 1997, forthcoming).

<sup>53</sup> Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 123, lines 21-24 'And then the devil felt the hook which he had before greedily swallowed; for our Lord arose from death on the Sunday, which we call Easter Day, which will be a fortnight today' (translation Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 122, lines 21-23).

<sup>54</sup> Thorpe, *Homilies of Ælfric*, I, 216, lines 31-33.

<sup>55</sup> Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 121, line 34 - p. 123, l.3 'and the devil blinded their hearts so that they could not know our Lord who was amongst them. *Quia si principes mundi hujus Christum cognovissent nunquam illum crucifixissent*; that is to say, If the head-men (princes) of this world had known Christ, they would never have fastened him to the cross for our salvation' (translation from Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 120, line 31 - p. 122, line 3).

<sup>56</sup> Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 123, lines 17-21 'He took not all those who were therein, but only one portion, as one taketh a bite out of an apple, for it was written through the prophet, *O mors, ero mors tua, morsus tuus ero inferne*; that is, Thou death, I will be thy death, and thou hell, I will be thy sting' (translation from Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 122, lines 17-21).

<sup>57</sup> Morris, *Old English Homilies*, p. 123, lines 23-24.

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<sup>58</sup> Other occurrences of this unusual practice include the composite pieces in London, British Library manuscript Cotton Tiberius A.iii article 16 and Junius 121 article 33, as discussed above.

<sup>59</sup> One surviving copy of the whole of 'In Dominica Palmarum', written in the second half of the twelfth century, that in Bodley 343, is thought to have been written in a centre with access to Worcester, or possibly Hereford.