# The Representation and Reception of the Devil in the Eleventh Century

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Abstract

This thesis examines the representation of the devil in late Anglo-Saxon England as perceived by the large, lay audience, which is represented only rarely in the textual record. Considering the relationship between the interpretations of the period as evinced by literary, historical and archaeological evidence, the investigation considers the extent to which we can discern the presence and profile of an audience for the themes with which the evidence is concerned.

The surviving vernacular texts of late Anglo-Saxon England indicate a growth in the importance of the canon of homiletic texts and an expansion of its function in the last decades of the tenth century. By considering the representation of the character of the devil and similar characters such as attendant demons, Antichrist, and human agents typologically and explicitly linked with the devil, this thesis takes the traditional approach of a thematic investigation and augments it by considering the impact of these representations in the context of their relative influence on audiences as evinced by their survival in the manuscript record.

Considering the authors' subsequent re-engagement with their own canons, this thesis seeks to locate attitudes towards audience and the manner in which the expressive opportunity offered by the devil is moulded to its function in motivating specific action in the texts' audience. Through their representation of the devil, homilists show both active engagement with their audiences' pastoral needs and anxiety about their limitations.

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Abbreviations

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| *ASE* | *Anglo-Saxon England* |
| BL | British Library |
| CCCC | Corpus Christi College, Cambridge |
| CCSL | Corpus Christianorum Series Latina |
| *CH* 1 | Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, First Series |
| *CH* 2 | Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, Second Series |
| DOE Corpus | Dictionary of Old English Corpus |
| EETS | Early English Text Society |
| *Fontes* | Fontes Anglo-Saxonici Database |
| PASE | Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England |
| PL | Patriologia Latina |

Contents

Introduction

'The devil is the most frequently appearing character in Old English poetry, and possibly in all Old English literature.'[1] The opening observation of Peter Dendle's monograph *Satan Unbound* gives us ample reason to be interested in Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards the devil, as the character appears throughout the poetic corpus and frequently in the prose. What, then, would most people know about the devil in late Anglo-Saxon England?

Representations of the devil in Old English literature have elicited an abundance of responses from critics. Indeed, as Dendle asserts, 'The devil's story has been told many times in recent years, and needs little more than a skeletal summary here.'[2] Dendle's accompanying note lists the works of Jeffrey Burton Russell, Everett Ferguson, Henry Ansgar Kelley, Neil Forsyth and the earlier studies by F. C. Conybeare and Edward Langton, establishing a healthy tradition of scholarship on the subject of the character and function of the devil.[3] Correlative subjects such as demons, hell, possession, Antichrist, heresy, curses, false gods, and purgatory all enjoy similarly rich considerations.[4]

Russell's multivolume history of the character of the devil and the concept of evil is the standard work, though his focus is broad and his methodology one of the history of ideas rather than that of communities, meaning his insights are of

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[1] Peter Dendle, *Satan Unbound: The Devil in Old English Narrative Literature*, (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 2001), p. 3.

[2] Ibid., p. 8.

[3] Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984); Everett Ferguson, *Demonology of the Early Christian World*, (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellon Press, 1984); Henry A. Kelley, *The Devil, Demonology and Witchcraft*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968); Neil Forsyth, *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); F. C. Conybeare, 'The Demonology of the New Testament', *The Jewish Quarterly Review,* 8 (1896), pp. 576-608; F. C. Conybeare, 'The Demonology of the New Testament', *The Jewish Quarterly Review,* 9 (1897), pp. 59-114, 444-70, 581-603; Edward Langton, *Satan, A Portrait: A Study in the Character of Satan through All the Ages*, (London: Skeffington & Son, 1946).

[4] The list that follows is by no means exhaustive but rather an indication of the work that has taken place. See Bernard Bamberger, *Fallen Angels*, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1952); Alan Bernstein, *The Formation of Hell: Death and Retribution in the Ancient and Early Christian Worlds*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); *The Devil, Heresy, and Witchcraft in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Jeffrey B. Russell*, ed. by Alberto Ferreiro, (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

limited value in formulating an understanding of audience response.[5] Russell states that '[d]uring the period between Eriugena and Anselm, while theology was producing little new about the Devil, representational and literary art dramatized and actualized him.'[6] Though the period may have contributed little to Russell's project, the expressive opportunity offered by a stable theological position lends scope to the representational and literary art that Russell mentions. Therefore, it will be helpful to outline the theological position of the writers of Anglo-Saxon England before continuing into specific representations of the devil during the period.

Theologically, the devil of the Anglo-Saxon period is the devil of Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville, Bede, Alcuin and Eriugena.[7] Gregory's diabology (by far the most influential of this group) is based on that of the Church fathers: the devil was the first being to be created, was created good and was the highest of the angels, either a cherub or a seraph. After sinning, the devil fell as low as he had been high, and this particular aspect was taken up by Isidore who extrapolated the hierarchies of the angels and their perverse reflection in the hierarchy of the demons.[8] The Council of Braga (563) established as heretical the view of Priscillianists and other dualists who took the position that the devil existed independently of God. The rejection of dualism led to some complex arguments about how evil can exist in a context where God created everything and God did not create evil. It is from this tension that the doctrine of privation developed: that sin is in fact non-being, as it is in every created thing's nature to be, and to be good. It is the 'changeability' built into created things that allows them to err from their nature, and it is so in-built to facilitate free will. The devil, then, fell because of his own pride, and was able to fall through the changeability necessary for free will to exist.[9]

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[5] Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977); Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981); Russell, *Lucifer*.

[6] Russell, *Lucifer*, p. 129. On visual art see below, Section 2.1.1.

[7] Ibid., pp. 92-128 and 316-19.

[8] Ibid., p. 94.

[9] Ibid., pp. 94-102.

Russell's survey of the literature of the period focuses on what he describes as 'literature [...] written by educated authors for an audience that was often unlearned in Latin, but the power and sophistication of the vernacular was such that its appeal also reached the highly educated, and many of its ideas entered the tradition.'[10] For Russell's purposes this suffices, as it establishes the matter concerning the devil that will go on to influence the later development of 'the tradition' throughout the twelfth and following centuries. The nature of the reception of the ideas by that audience is not Russell's concern, and his analysis offers little indication of popular understanding of the devil in the period. Russell's observations on this topic are confined to folklore and popular religion, of which he states:

> Folklore shades into popular religion, but the latter is more self-conscious, deliberate, and coherent. Popular religion consists of the beliefs and practices of people of simple or no education, and it appears most clearly in homiletic literature, the sermons, *exempla* (or formulas for sermons) of such writers as Gregory the Great, Aelfric, and Caesarius of Heisterbach.[11]

The analysis that follows does nothing to unpick the relationship between that which was being taught from the pulpit (or its equivalent), and the two aspects at the extremes of late Anglo-Saxon religious or quasi-religious observance, the theological and the folkloric. By collocating these opposing outliers and failing to define and explore these concepts, Russell's work offers a rather teleological view of the devil in late Anglo-Saxon England.

There are two studies of the devil focussed more specifically on the Anglo-Saxon period: the thesis of David F. Johnson and the monograph of Peter Dendle.[12] These studies, in turn, draw on a wider critical interest in the Anglo-Saxon devil; portrayals of the devil in Anglo-Saxon literature (and art) are frequently vivid, astonishing and captivating, so it is unsurprising that the devil has been lavished

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[10] Ibid., p. 133.
[11] Ibid., p. 62.
[12] David F. Johnson, 'Studies in the Literary Career of the Fallen Angels: The Devil and his Body in Old English literature', (doctoral thesis, Cornell University, 1993); Dendle, *Satan Unbound*.

with critical attention.[13] Unfortunately the theme has suffered as a result of its prodigious representation, in that critics have focussed on exceptional elements, and thereby on that which is unlikely to have formed the popular view of the devil. Johnson's thesis generally focuses on sources that survive in unique copies such as *Genesis A*, *Christ and Satan*, *Guthlac A*, *Elene*, and manuscript illustrations. Because of this focus it is difficult to discern the extent to which Johnson's findings can be generalised to wider audiences than the specific audience of any given witness of a text or instance of other media such as the images preserved in manuscript witnesses.

Similarly, the criteria of Dendle's investigation are designed to limit his focus to the character of the devil rather than its function in the lives of the texts' audience.[14] Although these studies insightfully analyse questions of the transmission of ideas between texts, they fail to consider those texts' impact upon audiences beyond the immediate reader. Additionally, with the focus on texts and

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[13] On the character of the devil in poetry: R. E. Woolf, 'The Devil in Old English Poetry', *Review of English Studies,* n.s. 4 (1953), pp. 1-12, specifically on the devil of the Junius Manuscript: Kathleen M. Ashley, 'The Guiler Beguiled: Christ and Satan as Theological Tricksters in Medieval Religious Literature', *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts,* 24 (1982), pp. 126-37; Margaret Bridges and Neil Forsyth, 'The Heroic and Elegiac Contexts of Two Old English Laments of the Fallen Angel: Towards a Theory of Medieval Daemonization', in *Reading Contexts,* (Tübingen: Narr, 1988), pp. 117-32; Robert Hasenfratz, 'Eisegan stefne (Christ and Satan 36a), the Visio Pauli, and *ferrea vox* (Aeneid 6, 626)', *Modern Philology: A Journal Devoted to Research in Medieval and Modern Literature,* 86 (1989), pp. 398-403; Thomas D. Hill, 'Satan's Fiery Speech: *Christ and Satan* 78-79', *Notes and Queries,* 19 (1972), pp. 2-4; Thomas D. Hill, 'The Fall of Satan in the Old English *Christ and Satan*', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology,* 76 (1977), pp. 315-25; Thomas D. Hill, 'The Measure of Hell: *Christ and Satan* 695-722', *Philological Quarterly,* 60 (1981), pp. 409-14; Hugh T. Keenan, 'Satan Speaks in Sparks: Christ and Satan 78-79a, 161b-162b, and the Life of St. Anthony', *Notes and Queries,* 21 (1974), pp. 283-84; Susannah B. Mintz, 'Words Devilish and Divine: Eve as Speaker in *Genesis B*', *Neophilologus,* 81 (1997), pp. 609-23. On the use of images in manuscripts Catherine E. Karkov, *Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England: Narrative Strategies in the Junius 11 Manuscript,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Barbara Raw, 'Pictures: the Books of the Unlearned?', in *The Christian Tradition in Anlgo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship,* ed. by Paul Cavill (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), pp. 103-20.

[14] Dendle states 'I have selected for close examination those appearances of the devil which most exhibit spatial or numerical incongruities, a sample which, as it turns out, represents most of the longer and more important narrative texts in the corpus.' He goes on to conclude his *Introduction* '[...] if the literature seems artistically deliberate and affected, this does not mean that it did not serve simultaneously as a venue for the expression of sincere preoccupations and anxieties.' Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, p. 18. Dendle's model of the function of the literature and artistic endeavours of the period is similar to Russell's: 'The history of representational art does not fit neatly into the history of concepts, because it does not always interact closely with other modes of expression. Artists often make choices for aesthetic rather than for theological or symbolic reasons; they might for example, portray Lucifer in a certain colour or attitude for reasons of composition rather than cult.' Russell, *Lucifer*, p. 129.

the texts' intertextuality, rather than audience, these studies frequently avoid understanding authorial intent and interaction with audience in coming to the studies' conclusions. Dendle's investigation seeks to understand the observed reluctance to resolve the tensions and contradictions in the character, power, and appearances of the Anglo-Saxon devil during the sixth age of man, by analysing what he refers to as 'seepage points' or 'ontological fissures' between the demonic and the human, chaos and order, the human psyche and the cosmos.[15] However, Dendle's comments on the relationship between folklore and popular religion suppress aspects of our understanding of the subtleties established in Anglo-Saxon understanding of the devil. Dendle notes that 'the devil is largely a literary motif, encountered primarily in ecclesiastical productions' but uses this broad comment to build the following point:

> If the devil does loom large in many of our sources, it is because the extant writings were largely produced and preserved in ecclesiastical environments, and because they are moral rather than scientific in nature.[16]

From such a statement it is apparent that Dendle's model of manuscript and textual transmission is extremely minimalist. Leaving aside the anachronistic distinction between the strictly moral and the strictly scientific, the inference Dendle is making, that the production of manuscripts in ecclesiastical environments defines their use as being only in those same ecclesiastical environments, is unwarranted. Our current model for understanding the movement of texts involves the function of the ecclesiastical environments Dendle refers to as being the centres of distribution surrounded by a network of other institutions, both larger and smaller.[17]

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[15] Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, p. 120.

[16] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[17] See John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Richard Gameson, 'Anglo-Saxon Scribes and Scriptoria', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain,* ed. by Richard Gameson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 94-120; Jonathan Wilcox, 'The Dissemination of Wulstan's Homilies: the Wulfstan Tradition in Eleventh-Century Vernacular Preaching', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium,* ed. by Carola Hicks (Stamford, Lincs: Paul Watkins, 1992), pp. 199-218 and *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series*, ed. by Peter Clemoes, EETS SS 17 (London: Oxford University Press for the EETS, 1997), and below, Chapters 3, 4, and 6.

Dendle suggests: 'In proceeding to the literature of the monasteries and chapter houses, then, we are in all likelihood departing from the everyday conceptions of the demonic of the average uneducated Anglo-Saxon, only the slightest and most tantalizing glimpse of which can be discerned in the opaque charm record.'[18] This comment makes several troubling assumptions but is symptomatic of the wider critical ethos.[19] Firstly, it assumes that the literature of the manuscripts is confined to chapter houses and an exclusive audience, an assumption which research on the manuscript evidence of these texts has shown to be unlikely.[20] Secondly, it is not at all clear from the sources he is describing that the 'average uneducated Anglo-Saxon' (a troubling concept in itself as it implies a standard view across time periods and geography) could have equated daily experience of misadventure with the devil without access to the texts Dendle denies them. Finally, I can discern no reason, from the manuscripts at least, to trust the testimony of the charm literature as an indicator of 'popular' belief as privileged over many other texts, especially the homilies and law codes, about whose cultural contexts we know a good deal more. There is a wider, and modern, critical bias in studies of the devil, demons and supernatural agents which have sought to find relics of a pre-Christian past preserved and transmuted into Christian ideas, rather than to study the beliefs as stated by their authors.[21] Furthermore, in seeking to use literature as a lens from which to abstract beliefs with which it is not directly concerned, this approach uses the texts as reflections of reflections on understanding rather than as elements within a textual system which both influences and reflects beliefs and practices. This is a highly reductive method when used unsympathetically with those texts' contexts, especially when

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[18] Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, p. 17. See also below, Section 2.1.2 especially at n. 113.

[19] See, for example, Audrey L. Meaney, ''And we forbeodað eornostlice ælcne hæðenscipe': Wulfstan and Late Anglo-Saxon and Norse 'Heathenism'', in *Wulfstan, Archibishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 461-500.

[20] See Mary Swan, 'Ælfric as Source: the Exploitation of Ælfic's Catholic Homilies from the Late Tenth to Twelfth Centuries', (doctoral thesis, University of Leeds, 1993), pp. 193-97. Note I refer specifically to the literature contained in the manuscripts rather than the surviving manuscripts themselves. I will return to consider this topic more fully later in the conclusion.

[21] See e.g. Woolf, whose study, though sympathetic to its texts and their contexts, seeks parallels in near Germanic cultures rather than exploring Anglo-Saxon innovations within the tradition of devilish representation. Woolf, 'The Devil in Old English Poetry'.

the enquiry is driven by the intention to uncover beliefs with which the texts are not necessarily concerned.

Dendle's focus on narrative function is in sympathy with the long-held position that the devil is theologically uninteresting in late Anglo-Saxon England. Early work characterized Old English authors as little more than conduits for copying whatever text was placed in front of them (with a greater or lesser amount of embellishment). In describing the early scholarly perspective, Gatch draws attention to his contemporary, Wrenn, who describes Anglo-Saxon theology as 'derivative in doctrine, pastoral in approach, [and] practical of application'.[22] Reacting against this view, Gatch makes the case that Old English, uniquely for surviving texts of the period, represents a broad geographical area, one that is larger than an immediate community, and which is also responsive to local traditions.[23]

Gatch admits that, above all else, early medieval theology was conservative, and continues, 'theology was in no way a speculative or even metaphysical discipline in the Early Middle Ages as it was to become in the hands of pre-scholastic and scholastic theologians from the twelfth century to the end of the Middle Ages'.[24] In this context, the mandate for ecclesiastical and monastic writing was, above all else, to hand on the traditional teaching of the Church; implicitly, the emphasis was on preservation rather than on contribution. With exciting portrayals readily available in the well-studied poetic corpus, and a theological position of orthodox conservatism in relation to the devil in both the narrative sources and sources for which we have a greater understanding of performance context and audience, prior studies have focussed on the devil's character and the

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[22] Milton McC. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan*, (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 6, quoting C. L. Wrenn, 'Some Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Theology', in *Studies in Language, Literature and Culture of the Middle Ages and Later,* ed. by E. Bagby Atwood and Archibald A. Hill (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 1969), pp. 182-89 at p. 182.

[23] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 6. See also Swan, 'Ælfric as Source: the Exploitation of Ælfic's Catholic Homilies from the Late Tenth to Twelfth Centuries', pp. 181-97.

[24] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 4. See also Russell, *Lucifer*, especially pp. 92-127. It is telling that Russell's review of the theological development of the devil in Western Europe contains no intermediate step between Eriugena in the ninth century and Anselm in the late-eleventh and early-twelfth centuries (1033-1109).

'devil of the imagination' so vividly conjured by unusual examples such as the psychologically complex representation found in *Genesis B*, rather than the devil perceived by more general audiences in late Anglo-Saxon England.[25]

These characteristics of the critical corpus are indicative of a wider ethos that privileges the spectacular over the effective. Where the devil has been considered in its cultural context it is usually as a locus at which later Anglo-Saxon authors have sited the beliefs that predate their culture's exposure to Christianity. Critics have sought to read a pagan pantheon as almost typologically linked to the contemporary description and presentation of the devil. Lees expresses this distribution of interest and industry in Anglo-Saxon studies: 'Anglo-Saxonists have often seemed more comfortable with the "search for Anglo-Saxon paganism," as E. G. Stanley (1975) puts it, than with the search for its Christianity.'[26] This focus has frequently allowed the representations of the devil to be found in the texts that survive to be abused, to be co-opted as evidence for understanding a culture which significantly predates the works in which the evidence is found, and which the recording culture was both reacting to and in dialogue with. The nature of the relationships between these cultures will always confuse the issue for modern scholars, and hinder the efficacy of such investigations.

These studies, in their selection criteria, have elided the distinction between that which is interesting as testimony to the achievement of the culture of Anglo-Saxon England at its extremity, and that which is historically important as a

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[25] As an example of the increase in the incidence of psychological analyses of characters in *Genesis B*: Karen Cherewatuk, 'Standing, Turning, Twisting, Falling: Posture and Moral Stance in *Genesis B*', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen,* 87 (1986), pp. 537-44; Margaret J. Ehrhart, 'Tempter as Teacher: Some Observations on the Vocabulary of the Old English *Genesis B*', *Neophilologus,* 59 (1975), pp. 435-46; J. R. Hall, '*Geongordom* and *Hyldo* in *Genesis B*: Serving the Lord for the Lord's Favour', *Papers in Language and Literature,* 11 (1975), pp. 302-07; Eric Jager, 'Tempter as Rhetoric Teacher: the Fall of Language in the Old English *Genesis B*', *Neophilologus,* 72 (1988), pp. 434-48; Eric Jager, 'The Word "Breost": Interiority and the Fall in *Genesis B*', *Neophilologus,* 75 (1991), pp. 279-90; Anne L. Klinck, 'Female Characterisation in Old English Poetry and the Growth of Psychological Realism: *Genesis B* and *Christ I*', *Neophilologus,* 63 (1979), pp. 597-610; Peter J. Lucas, 'Loyalty and Obedience in the Old English *Genesis* and the Interpolation of *Genesis B* into *Genesis A*', *Neophilologus,* 76 (1992), pp. 121-35; Alain Renoir, 'The Self-Deception of Temptation: Boethian Psychology in *Genesis B*', in *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays,* ed. by Robert P. Creed (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University Press, 1967), pp. 47-68.
[26] Clare Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 3.

reflection of the culture of Anglo-Saxon England.[27] Having established the devil as theologically 'uninteresting' and focussing critical attention on the unusual, we are left with little understanding of the way in which the devil was perceived by, and evoked for, the people who had least access to texts, but who made up the majority of Anglo-Saxon England. We are also left with relatively little insight into authors' perception of what they were achieving when they deployed and used the devil in a hortatory and didactic context, which makes up the majority of the texts' contemporary influence.[28] Lees' exposition of the methodological problems facing the critic of texts that are both high-use and high-availability highlights some important aspects of the biases that are inherent in critical approaches to the texts of the late Anglo-Saxon period. Lees suggests that 'the critical evaluation of cultural products by genre sometimes obscures a slightly different emphasis in the culture itself.'[29] The cultural context of textual evidence has been of especial importance to the research agenda of the decades immediately before and since Lees questioned its suppression in modern Anglo-Saxon criticism. Divides between genres, cultures, and even disciplines have been challenged extensively such that interdisciplinary approaches are, now more than ever, accepted and encouraged. Critics have become increasingly aware of the biases imposed on the evidence from the methods of cataloguing, catagorizing, and analysing employed by modern scholars of the discipline.

We have good cause to return to the question stated at the start of this discussion, though in a slightly more nuanced form, with a more holistic view of the texts that survive and their function and influence in the society they reflect: 'What was the level and nature of understanding of the devil in Anglo-Saxon communities in the tenth and eleventh centuries?' In what follows I have explored this question through the lens of those texts for which we have most evidence of significant and sustained impact on the people of late Anglo-Saxon England, the

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[27] One notes, however, that the dichotomy can be overstated easily as all texts are simultaneously a function of the society which created them and an influence on the society(-ies) in which they were used but unpicking the extent to which texts are either a reflection or an influence of popular understanding is likely to be a largely fruitless endeavour.

[28] Or more strictly, the majority of the public function of texts for which evidence survives in the manuscript record. See below Sections 2.3, 3.2, 5.3.1 and *Conclusion*.

[29] Lees, *Tradition and Belief*, p. 23.

vernacular homilies, especially those of Ælfric and Wulfstan in their temporal and manuscript context.

In the first chapter, however, I propose that a good diachronic index of understanding of the devil and its manifest reality for the people of the late Anglo-Saxon period is to be found in the evidence of the law codes and charters. From the incidental references made in these customary documents I attempt to derive the understanding which the writers of these documents rely on for the documents' efficacy, and therefore that which is likely to be ubiquitous providing a point of comparison to the subsequent investigation. In terms of the attested copies in manuscripts from the period, the texts of the last decade of the tenth century form the strongest influence on subsequent interpretation of the devil, so it is on the corpus of texts composed in this period that I focus the remainder of the investigation.[30] The second chapter is concerned with establishing the context of the homilies, with an emphasis on evidence for their wide and public use. Furthermore, this chapter considers other, extra-textual influence on the laity's understanding of the devil, such as pictorial representations, and their likely contexts. It also starts to unpick the question that hangs over the availability of texts in local communities in the late-tenth and early-eleventh centuries, and the types of performance contexts in which they were consumed. The third chapter focusses on Ælfric's approach to his *Catholic Homilies* as a project and how that influences our understanding of the themes he discusses. This chapter uses evidence derived from the early manuscript copies of the *Catholic Homilies* to explore Ælfric's re-engagement with his own material in sympathy with his audience, which has a significant impact on the representation of the devil he provides. The fourth chapter considers the representation of the devil itself. Specifically, it analyses how the homilies' audiences would have synthesised an understanding of the devil and his attendant demons, their forms and practices, by combining the representations in individual homilies to present an holistic understanding of the form and function of the devil in a didactic context. This

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[30] See Swan, 'Ælfric as Source: the Exploitation of Ælfic's Catholic Homilies from the Late Tenth to Twelfth Centuries' and below, *Conclusion* for a detailed discussion of this distribution pattern.

chapter also contains a discussion of the way in which the efficacy of the devil in the narratives frequently relies on manipulation of fact in order to create ambiguity in which devils can deceive the unwary. The relationship and distinction between the devil and the collective devils is most fully explored in the literature relating to Antichrist, and it is this character that forms the focus of the final chapter. Antichrist itself is most fully described by Wulfstan and by considering Wulfstan's writing activity in its context, his intentions as distinct from those of Ælfric, and the effect of the dialogue between the two authors on both their corpora is explored through their changing attitudes towards Antichrist over the authors' writing careers. In the conclusion, as well as drawing together the results of the various focussed studies of the chapters, I consider the way in which the nature of our understanding of the dissemination of the texts which are formative in the reception of the devil can be explored more fully, in order to nuance our interpretations and better understand the applicability and limitations of the conclusions.

1.0 Texts that reflect understanding of the devil

When forming views of what the lower orders of Anglo-Saxon society thought and believed, it is usual to refer to the charm lore, and those texts that may exist (in otherwise ecclesiastical works) as fossils of folkloric belief that have somehow missed the scribal, Christian, censor.[31] Jolly states 'In a world where everything was alive with spiritual presences, where the doors between heaven and earth were open all around, then saints, demons, and elves were all equally possible. Such was the world of late Saxon England.'[32] With respect to the devil, one can discern multiple wills at work in such a schema. The world that is 'alive with spiritual presences', and the elves of Jolly's thesis, are both frequently collocated with devils in the late-tenth and eleventh centuries by authors including Ælfric.[33] That such collocation takes place constitutes an important indicator that the beliefs behind the popular religion to which Jolly refers retain some potency in this late period. However for the current study their reinterpretation is more significant than the pre-existing beliefs they reflect.

It should be noted at the outset that Ælfric is not innovating in this reinterpretation. The use of 'deoflum geldað' (offerings to devils) predates Ælfric

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[31] See Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, p. 17 quoted above. The assumption implicit in such a mandate is that common Anglo-Saxons were a persistently superstitious group reluctant to surrender their engagement with their non-Christian past, or at an extreme interpretation, that Christianity was the religion only of the rich and the powerful. There is some corroborating evidence though it is at best allusive.  If Anglo-Saxon authors do show a persistent anxiety over the practices of those outside of the church's control, it can be easily accounted for by the discontinuous but persistent presence of paganisms in England, rather than English paganism. Incoming Scandinavian raiding and later occupation forces present a constant danger that can as easily (if not more readily) elicit a response from contemporary authors as folkloric practices persisting amongst the misguided. See e.g. John D. Niles, 'Pagan Survivals and Popular Belief', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature,* ed. by Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 126-42, esp. p. 127-34; Jolly also describes this phenomenon in the tenth and eleventh centuries, especially in the north of England: 'conversion of the pagan newcomers and reform of Christian society merged, as churchmen simultaneously castigated pagan practices and called for renewal amongst Christians', Karen Louise Jolly, *Popular Religion in Late Saxon England: Elf Charms in Context*,  (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 39. See also Judith Jesch, 'Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism' in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Scholarship and Teaching,* ed. by Paul Cavill (Woddbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), pp. 55-68. For an analysis of the largely unsuccessful attempts to use allusive material in this way throughout the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, Eric Gerald Stanley, *The Search for Anglo-Saxon Paganism*, (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1975).

[32] Jolly, *Popular Religion*, p. 2.

[33] See ibid., Chapters 4 and 5, and below, Chapter 4, especially Section 4.2.1.

by some margin, appearing in the early law-code *Wihtræd* (dated to 695) and indicating an association between the prior religions and devils in the late Anglo-Saxon, Christian, interpretation.[34] Jolly's thesis is that the lens of popular religion allows us to reconcile the seeming contradictions between the fossilized religious practices that are preserved in the charms on the one hand, and the tradition in which they were recorded on the other. This schema seeks to break down the distinction established by Gregory of Tours, Bede, Ælfric, and Wulfstan who, Jolly argues, see conversion as 'a dramatic event switching from one side to another'.[35] She proposes a model which instead 'constitute[s] evidence of the religion's [Christianity's] success in conversion by accommodating Anglo-Saxon culture'.[36] There are problems here, however.

The basis upon which the charm lore is turned to is, in a sense, well-founded: teaching received in an informal, probably familial and local context, leaves no strict record directly in manuscripts, and if it does leave a mark in the literature (rather than the physicality of the manuscripts) it is difficult to conceive of a way in which it would be teased out from its context in a convincing manner. It is, of course, not the case that we have transcripts of the conversations that went on in a family or community; rather, we see glimpses of such interactions in other media such as the archaeological record, and behaviours described in narrative accounts. Nor is it the case that all commentators simply assume that every member of the laity of Anglo-Saxon England was at best paying lip service to Christianity while privately performing devotions to prior religions. Undoubtedly the mixture of practices that happened in, for example, the tenth century, were more diverse than those for which evidence remains, and more subtly nuanced than we can ever hope to understand. Jolly's contention, that religion as practised in late Anglo-Saxon England inhabited a continuum from the extremes of eremitic devotion to the Christian God, to the types of paganism enjoyed in the Danelaw by (at least, but probably not only) Scandinavian immigrants, is both compelling and

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[34] F. L. Attenborough, *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), p. 27.
[35] Jolly, *Popular Religion*, p. 9.
[36] Ibid., p. 9.

eminently sensible. The charms, however, do not seem to provide a good index for this influence. Firstly, they are mediated in a record in which what we use them to represent would have little relevance: 'folksy' teaching that appears alongside the pseudo-scientific prognostics is probably more representative of over-intellectualised experiential wisdom than a meditation on any given theme, and, more pertinently for the current study, the devil. Secondly, any folkloristic belief that emphatically contradicts orthodoxy (to the extent that it is understood by those in the scribal process) is unlikely to survive the writing process if texts are modified by a Christian censor before being recorded, or are engaged with by a Christian scribe during their copying. Finally, even if they were to provide an index, their unique survival and their assumed reflection of local tradition provides only one point on that continuum and cannot be abstracted to demarcate the range of beliefs, nor any idea of the distribution of individuals across that spectrum.

That these beliefs existed, I do not doubt, and one could look to Ælfric's comments that he saw much 'gedwyld' being taught, or his coda on healing practices in *Passio Sancti Bartholomei Apostoli* (*CH* 1.31), as an allusive corroboration for them, but the idea that these would survive in the charms is hopeful rather than probable.[37] These influences are now most likely irrecoverable, but the proposition that ecclesiastics were not faced with a blank canvas (with respect to belief) in those they taught is highly likely. Given the restrictions of the surviving evidence, I suggest that a more compelling and relevant place to look for these beliefs, and especially the way they are conceived as being an act of the devil's instigaton by the Christian scribes, would be the law codes. These documents are customary, concerned with the behavior of all orders of society, and enjoy a rich history of preservation, adoption, and modification by successive rulers. In order to be effective they must also be accepted by the majority of the population. Disentangling what constitutes adoption or

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[37] *CH: First Series*, p. 174. An equally, if not more, plausible analysis of the first passage would find its roots in poor Christian learning and literal understanding of especially Old Testament narratives that are not alive to the nuance that such readings should account for in the light of the New Testament. See below, Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.4.

modification is not an easy task, nor is establishing access to the texts of the surviving documents, but as a proxy to a record of contentious belief that is being reinterpreted by the Christian elements in society, the law codes offer fewer problems than do the charms.

In using these texts as a mirror for belief and practices one must ask questions of how they were disseminated or formed, and what their likely relationship is to the belief structures of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Pratt provides a useful summary of the effects and uses of legislation in the tenth century, favouring a more expansive reading of the evidence than some other commentators have suggested.[38] Pratt presents evidence that to him 'confirms the impact of Alfredian learned reforms on elite perceptions: whether read aloud to a wider audience, or in person, writing here supplied enhanced proof, in these circumstances, of local action requested from the centre.'[39] One need not go so far as Pratt and suggest copious distribution beyond the texts that survive in order to view the corpus as a relevant reflection of the beliefs of the people of Anglo-Saxon England. Wormald describes at length the processes by which he understands 'the truth that law-making was the business of the community at large, distilled in its most prominent members'.[40]

One argument for using law codes as reflections of pre-existing customs rather than active tools of reform in the early period is the naming of what we currently refer to as *Æthelberht* (Cameron number B 14.1). Wormald highlights that the code does not contain the preface attributing it to the king as we have in other circumstances, the only internal evidence for his authorship being a rubric which Wormald implies is unlikely to have been part of the text as it was transmitted historically, but rather part of the schema for the layout of the specific manuscript in which it appears. The code lacks the 'prologue [...] authoritatively

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[38] David Pratt, 'Written Law and the Communication of Authority in Tenth-Century England', in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1876-1947),* ed. by David Rollason, Conrad Leyser, and Hannah Williams (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp. 331-50.

[39] Ibid., p. 350.

[40] Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 94.

identifying' the ruler which appear in subsequent codes. Indeed later codes refer to the (presumably these) earlier laws as 'æ', a word meaning 'accepted law' rather than the more unilateral 'dom', a judgment, implicitly that of an individual making a decision for a group rather than a reflection of the group's views.[41] If this is true of the early codes in their own context, the fact that they are deployed at all in the textual record, and indeed in their specific context alongside the other law codes, implies something of their interest to later students of the law. More importantly, Alfred's reference to the tradition of law-making in his preface to his law code (which transmits the law code *Ine* alongside it as a token of its veracity and part of that tradition) implies that the iterative and additive nature of laws is unchanged over time, even if their wording is more mutable. In the ninth century then, Alfred found these early codes to be sufficiently well known that he could lean on their veracity for the assurance of his own laws. This provides a strong mandate for understanding legal documents as reflections of their times, and therefore of contemporary understanding of the devil.

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[41] Ibid., pp. 93, 95. Until modern critics renamed it, Alfred's law code was known as *Alfred's Domboc*. See also Hlothære and Eadric's conception of the place of their laws within the legal tradition, below at n. 60.

1.1  The devil in law codes

The highly formulaic legal documents provide an interesting contrast to the poetic and later homiletic texts to be considered in more detail later in this thesis. Unlike the homilies and poetry, these are artistically inelegant, utilitarian, and functionally secular texts which have neither the religious nor the artistic imperative to include references to the devil. It is perhaps unsurprising in such circumstances that the phrases that include the devil are often ones that become stock formulas in the later texts and manuscripts. Of these laws, Dendle states: 'There are no secular laws forbidding interaction with the devil, and no instructions for how local authorities should deal with a demon, were they ever to catch one.'[42] Though this is strictly true, the analysis that follows indicates that religion plays an important part in the laws and here, as in more overtly religious texts, the devil is an important motivator for the modification of behaviour. Idiomatic uses of diabolical terminology in this context indicate shared understanding between author and the people to whom the laws apply. The important role of the Church in Anglo-Saxon society is established by the laws' content, and its influence on the laws themselves is indicated both internally, from the clauses which pertain directly to the Church, and externally, from the frequent involvement of bishops in their composition. At the outset it must be noted that these law codes appear only in later documents, specifically the *Textus Roffensis*, Rochester, Cathedral Library Manuscript A.3.5, which is an early-twelfth-century manuscript for the Kentish laws, and in the case of *Ine* where it has been copied with the later law-code *Alfred* which acts as an addendum to it.[43]

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[42]Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, p. 12. Dendle's accompanying note acknowledges that Cnut I reminds the reader that 'Nis nan swa yfel sceaða swa is deofol sylf'. ('There is no enemy so evil as is the devil himself') ibid., p. 131.

[43] These manuscripts comprise the s. ix/x CCCC 173, the s. x/xi CCCC 383, the s. xi[1] BL Cotton Otho B.xi, the s. xi[med] BL Cotton Nero A.i, and the s. xi[2] BL Burney 277. *Alfred-Ine* is also found in the *Textus Roffensis*. Angus Cameron, 'A List of Old English Texts', in *A Plan for the Dictionary of Old English,* ed. by Roberta Frank and Angus Cameron (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973), pp. 25-306, Neil R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), arts. 39, 65, 180, 163, 136 and 373 respectively.

These legal codes are given context by Bede in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Of Æthelberht, the earliest king whose law-code survives in either a copy or by reference, Bede states:

> Among other benefits which he conferred upon the race under his care, he
> established with the advice of his counsellors a code of laws after the
> Roman manner. These are written in English and are still kept and
> observed by the people. Among these he set down first of all what
> restitution must be made by anyone who steals anything belonging to the
> church or the bishop or any other clergy; these laws were designed to give
> protection to those whose coming and whose teaching he had welcomed.[44]

The evidence from the law-code of Æthelberht, the first-convert king, implies that at this early point in the engagement of Anglo-Saxon societies with Christianity and legislation, the legislature was content to give primacy to ecclesiastical figures and go no further. In *Æthelberht* the first clause establishes the position of the Church in Kent in the first decade of the seventh century:[45]

> (1) Godes feoh 7 circean XII gylde. Biscopes feoh XI gylde. Preostes feoh IX
> gylde. Diacones feoh VI gylde. Cleroces feoh III gylde. Ciricfriþ II gylde.
> Mæthl friþ II gylde.

> (1) [Theft of] God's property and the Church's shall be compensated twelve
> fold; a bishop's property eleven fold; a priest's property nine fold; a
> deacon's property six fold; a clerk's property three fold. Breach of the
> peace shall be compensated doubly when it affects a church or a
> meeting place.[46]

When considered in the context of the fourth clause the relative privilege of the position of the Church and bishops is apparent:

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[44] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), II.5, pp. 150-51.
[45] Attenborough, *Laws*, p. 2. *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, ed. by F. Liebermann, (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1903-16), p. 2.
[46] Attenborough, *Laws*, pp. 4-5. Translation of the laws follows Attenborough.

(4) Gif frigman cyninge stele, IX gylde forgylde.

(4) If a freeman robs the king, he shall pay back a nine fold amount.[47]

In terms of the amount of compensation that King Æthelberht expects from his subjects, he places himself on the same level as the priests and in a financially weaker position than bishops and the Church. The implication is that Æthelberht is willing to endorse the notion that a trespass against God and His servants is a greater crime than a trespass against the body of the king. Æthelberht's meaning could hardly be clearer and his view of his own relationship with God and God's auxiliaries on earth is made public through its inclusion in the law code.

It is also noteworthy that the first law that Æthelberht chooses to have recorded is regarding the primacy of the Church in his dominions. The eminence of the Church is made clear by this initial position, but the tone of the law is also important. Whereas later law codes open with *a priori* statements about the nature of the people to whom the laws apply, emphasizing the unity of the community as a self-consciously Christian community, the opening clause of *Æthelberht*, by contrast, is a punitive law designed to protect the Church's interests through financial penalties in a practical and transparent manner. The first interest of Æthelberht is implicitly the protection of the Church rather than the unity of his people, as appears to be the case with later law codes. Bede's account sheds some light on why this might be the case:

> It is related that the king, although he rejoiced at their conversion and their faith, compelled no one to accept Christianity; though none the less he showed greater affection for believers since they were his fellow citizens in the kingdom of heaven. But he had learned from his teachers and guides in the way of salvation that the service of Christ was voluntary and ought not to be compulsory.[48]

This is a society that is obviously not enjoying a state of unity in faith. Æthelberht is instigating a sizeable social shift and, in its fledgling position, the Church

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[47] Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[48] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, I.26, pp. 76-79.

requires the king's protection. The fragility of the Church's position is demonstrated by Bede as he later states:

> But after the death of Æthelberht, when his son Eadbald had taken over the helm of state, there followed a severe setback to the tender growth of the Church. [...] By both these crimes he [Eadbald] gave the occasion to return to their own vomit to those who had accepted the laws of faith and continence during his father's reign either out of fear of the king or to win his favour.[49]

Bede goes on to associate this apostasy with worldly punishments stating 'he [Eadbald] was afflicted by frequent fits of madness and possessed by an unclean spirit.'[50] It is not until Æthelberht's grandson Earconberht, however, that we have reports (again through Bede) of legislation which addresses religious practices directly, and not until *Wihtræd* two generations later, that evidence for this legislation survives. Wormald asserts '[...] whereas Bede says that Æthelberht's grandson Earconberht ordered the abandonment of idols and observance of Lent, the Æthelberht code merely sets out graded compensations for the property of successive clerical ranks in laws otherwise [...] secular'.[51] The Kentish kings' approach respects the hold that non-Christian religions have over the people for whom they are legislating, while trying to instigate change in these people.

The earliest extant reference to devils comes from the law-code *Wihtræd* (Cameron number B 14.3).[52] The law is dated to 6th September, 695 and was issued by Wihtræd, King of Kent (690-725) who succeeded his brother Eadric. Eadric's accession to the throne of Kent was a complicated process during which he led the South Saxons against his uncle, Hlothere, who ruled in Kent from 673 to 685. Wihtræd, was the great-great-grandson of Æthelberht of Kent and these figures represent a long line of Christian Kentish kings, so the stability Whitræd

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[49] Ibid., II.5, pp. 150-51.
[50] Ibid., II.5, pp. 150-51. Bede's description of the punishment neatly shows the combination of the evil behaviour, possession, and madness. I will discuss this later in visitation of the sick, but it is important here only to note the early combination of the themes and their long-standing relationship. See below, Section 4.2.4.
[51] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, pp. 93-94.
[52] *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, pp. 12-14.

enjoyed in his faith (as a fourth generation Christian) must have been tempered by the instability of the political situation within his kingdom. The kingdoms around Kent (i.e. East Anglia and the East and South Saxon kingdoms), all had more complicated engagements with Christianity including instances of apostasy which Bede reports in *Historia Ecclesiastica*. This law code bears some similarities to penitential texts,[53] and contains one law (*Whitræd* 28) which is almost identical to a law issued by Ine (*Ine* 20),[54] Wihtræd's contemporary and King of Wessex, though the part of the text quoted below does not seem to be directly related to either the penitential texts or *Ine*. *Wihtræd* includes two related clauses on idolatry:

> (12) Gif ceorl buton wifes wisdom deoflum gelde, he sie ealra his æhtan scyldig 7 healsfange. Gif betwu deoflum geldaþ, sion his healsfange scyldigo 7 ealra æhtan.

> (13) Gif þeuw deoflum geldaþ, VI scll' gebete oþþe his hyd.

> (12) If a husband, without his wife's knowledge, makes offerings to devils, he shall forfeit all his goods or his *healsfang*. If both [of them] make offerings to devils they shall forfeit their *healsfangs* or all their goods.

> (13) If a slave makes offerings to devils, he shall pay 6 shillings compensation or undergo the lash.[55]

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[53] Lisi Oliver, *The Beginnings of English Law*, (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 2002)47. Lisi Oliver, 'Royal and Ecclesiastical Law in Seventh-Century Kent', in *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald,* ed. by Stephen Baxter, et al. (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 97-112, esp. pp. 111-12. Oliver notes that Theodore's *Penitential* is more specific about the pagan practices that are being performed, but unfortunately for the current study those practices referred to as 'diabolical' are only allusive and from a clearly Christian perspective, thus describing a host of activities and in terms alien to their own nature. The reference which refers to those things quoted above is to clause 205 in Joseph Mone, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der teutschen Literatur und Sprache*, (Aachen: J. A. Mayer, 1830), p. 526. Of more interest is the 'defollican galdorsangas' of clause 113, p. 518. The link between the devil and performativity is expanded by Ælfric and others in the later period. On Theodore see also Audrey L. Meaney, 'Anglo-Saxon Idolators and Ecclesiasts from Theodore to Alcuin', in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History,* ed. by William Filmer-Sankey (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1992), pp. 103-25.

[54] Attenborough, *Laws*, pp. 3, 43.

[55] *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, p. 13; Attenborough, *Laws*, p. 27.

Wihtræd's stern position on idolatry is unsurprising in the context of his thoroughly Christian pedigree, though it is notable that Wihtræd's laws have a far more ecclesiastical aspect than those of his predecessors, either *Æthelberht* (B 14.1) or *Hlothære and Eadric* (B 14.2). Indeed, of *Wihtræd*, Wormald notes 'striking is the rise in abstract commands' and refers to the code as 'Wihtræd's heavily ecclesiastical code'.[56] By legislating against situations in which 'deoflum geldaþ' (they sacrifice to devils), Wihtræd is explicitly stating that, in his view, Christianity is now the norm in his kingdom and that non-conformity will result in exorbitant penalties. Whether this reflects reality is immaterial to the current study: idolatry is being couched explicitly in terms of offerings to devils themselves, not to images representing devils or images inhabited by devils, the 'deofolgyld' of the later texts.

It is also notable that the devils are established in plurality. What this plurality indicates is impossible to determine conclusively, but candidates include a one-to-one mapping with the plurality of gods in Anglo-Saxon non-Christian religions and hence the diversity of supernatural beings in those religions. Alternatively, the plurality of devils in the term 'deoflum geldaþ' may refer allusively to the dangers of disunity in religious practices and an early understanding of the advantages of orthodoxy. A plurality of gods connotes a diversity of powers, which is here implicitly compared to the omnipotence of God. Regardless, *Wihtræd* establishes for the people to whom the law-code applies that situations in which 'deoflum geldaþ' was a concern for both Church and state and indicates that both institutions were willing to take action against these practices.

These are the only instances of 'deoflum geldaþ' in the corpus of Old English, and 'deoflum gelde' is unique. In later documents the two words have collapsed into the ubiquitous 'deof[o]lg[e/y]ld', with the exception of one instance in the Old English *Martyrology* (Cameron number B 19.5, 'deolfum geldan').[57] With

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[56] Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, p. 102.

[57] Ælfric's preferred form is 'deofolg[i/y]ld' which he uses throughout his corpus, in both the First and Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*, as well as in his uncollected homilies. Ælfric occasionally deploys 'hæthengyld' as a synonym. The term appears in the Alfredian OE Bede, Orosius, and Gregory's *Dialogues*, as well as in numerous anonymous homilies (most frequently in the anonymous homily on Martin, Cameron number B 3.3.17), in the OE *Martyrology*, and in glosses to the Psalms. Wulfstan uses the term once in his *Homily on the Dedication of a Church* (Cameron B

such a small sample it is difficult to come to strong conclusions about what this means for the development of the understanding of the representation of the devil. The *Martyrology* appears in a late manuscript (London, British Library, Cotton Julius A.x, dated by Ker to s. x/xi), and therefore is of questionable use in contextualizing the use of 'deoflum geld[-]' as two words.[58]

Less direct interaction, but formulae which persist into the later period can be found in the law code *Ælfred-Ine* (dated to the end of the ninth century, Cameron number B 14.4). In his preface, Alfred is candid regarding the way in which he has collated the text of his law code:

> […] ða ðe ic gemette awðer oððe on Ines dæge, mines mæges, oððe on Offan Mercna cyninges oððeon Æþelbryhtes, þe ærest fulluhte onfeng on Angelcynne, þa ðe me ryhtoste ðuhton, ic þa heron gegaderode, 7 þa oðre forlet.

> […] those which were the most just of the laws I found – whether they dated from the time of Ine my kinsman, or of Offa, king of the Mercians, or of Æthelberht, who was the first [king] to be baptized in England – these I have collected while rejecting the others.[59]

Alfred claims to be updating the laws of the kingdom to reflect the changes that have occurred in the intervening period since the first law codes, just as Hlothære and Eadric claim to.[60] Some of the traits of Alfred's code, however, show a development from the early laws, leading to what has been described as 'a new form of legal theatricality'.[61] The relationships between the various kingdoms of the early period have changed significantly with the consolidation of rule under

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2.3.6), and it appears in poems in both the Exeter Book and Junius XI. There are a smattering of uses in Laws (*Alfred-Ine* and *Cnut II*), the *Chronicle*, monastic documents such as the *Rule of Chrodegang* and the *Revival of Monasticism* (Cameron number B 17.11) and finally in the prose dialogues of *Adrian and Ritheus*.

[58] Ker, *Catalogue*, art. 161.

[59] Attenborough, *Laws*, pp. 62-63.

[60] 'Hloþhære 7 Eadric, Cantwara cyningas, ecton þa æ, þa ðe heora aldoras ær geworhton, ðyssum domum þe her efter sægeð.' ('Holtthere and Eadric, Kings of Kent, extended the laws which their predecessors had made, by the decrees which are stated below', *Hlotthere and Eadric*, Preface), ibid., pp. 18-19.

[61] Pratt, 'Written Law and the Communication of Authority in Tenth-Century England', p. 340.

the now-dominant force of Wessex after the period of Danish invasion. The precedence of the Church seems to have changed little. Such clauses as show fines to be paid in part to the king and in part to the Church indicate that though the king may have gained a little more of a share of the fine, the situation is much the same in that both parties are being remunerated in comparable amounts.

In the text itself, a reference to the devil appears as an indicator of time in a list of days to be taken as holiday in the Church year: '7 ðone dæg þe Crist ðonne deofol oferswiðde' ('and the day that Christ overcame the devil').[62] By expressing Easter as a day of dominance over the devil, Alfred indicates what his intention is for the day. Though it is granted as a holiday, it is implicitly to be a day of reflection and introspection, and celebration of the devil's defeat, or rather of Christ's victory. The devil takes the object and is thus the recipient of the action, both grammatically and in the sense of subjugation implied by the verb 'oferswiðde'. This tactic of referring to festivals with their scriptural narrative significance is not used for the other days for holidays in this list, where a large stretch for Christmas is given, and the rest of the holidays are associated with the *Sanctorale* rather than the *Temporale*. The clause itself appears in a rather peculiar position, between two clauses on vendettas (preceding the holidays) and payments for wounds.

Towards the end of Alfred's lengthy introduction to his law code, while meditating on how the Old Testament law of the Jews was applied to Christian nations, Alfred includes a clause concerning Old Testament practices of idolatry:

(49, 5) Þæm halgan Gaste wæs geðuht 7 us, þæt we nane byrðenne on eow nedðearf wæs to healdanne: þæt [is] ðonne, þæt ge forberen, þæt ge deofolgeld ne weorðien, ne blod ne ðicggen ne asmorod, 7 from diernum geligerum; 7 þæt ge willen, þæt oðre men eow ne don, ne doð ge ðæt oþrum monnum.

(49,5) It was thought to both us and the Holy Ghost that we need not hold any further burden on you: except that you forbear, and do not honour any idol, nor consume blood nor that which has been strangled, and [forbear]

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[62] *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, p. 78; Attenborough, *Laws*, pp. 84-85.

from secret adulteries; and do not do to others what you wish other men not to do to you.[63]

This warning against idolatry in the law code indicates a link to adultery and suggests the burden image which will be used by later writers to develop into the 'deofles burðen' which is quite common in the homilies, especially the *Sanctorale* as will be established in a consideration of the *Catholic Homilies* later.[64] The passage itself is a quotation from Acts of the Apostles 15. 28-29. A number of details are interesting in this quotation: firstly, the distinction made between honouring the idol and the use of blood with the idol. Though these two acts are associated by their proximity, by making them two separate sub-clauses, the author of the laws allows the possibility that the practices that either causally or, more likely, coincidentally refer to Old Testament rituals, have separated out in the practical worship of some non-Christian Anglo-Saxons. The 'secret adulteries', at their most extreme, and therefore highly unlikely, interpretation, also provide allusions to the ritual prostitution to be found in the Old Testament.[65] If this is the case for the author then it must be at the very back of his mind as in the context of the main body of the laws these 'secret adulteries' alluded to are dealt with in a far more practical manner. In terms of the clause's context, clause eight deals with those abducting nuns, and clause ten with the (one assumes) more typical charge of the rape of another man's wife. Clause eleven, though, describes the response to a situation implicitly parallel to that of the temples of Jupiter Olympus and Jupiter Hospitalis in 2 Machabees:

> (11) Gif mon on cirliscre fæmnan breost gefo, mid V scill. hire gebete.
>     §1. Gif he hie oferweorpe 7 mid ne gehæme, mid X scill. gebete.
>     § 2. Gif he mid gehæme, mid LX scill. gebete.

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[63] *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, pp. 44-45, my translation. The vulgate at this point reads 'visum est enim Spiritui Sancto et nobis nihil ultra inponere vobis oneris quam haec necessario ut abstineatis vos ab immolatis simulacrorum et sanguine suffocato et fornicatione a quibus custodientes vos bene agetis valete' Acts of the Apostles 15. 28-29. Note that the 'secret adulteries' of the Old English are at some remove from the 'fornicatione' of the Latin.

[64] See below, Chapter 3, especially Section 3.4.2.

[65] 2 Machabees 6.1-4.

§3. Gif oðer mon mid hire læge ær, sie be healfum ðæm ðonne sio bot.

§4. Gif hie mon two, geladiege hie be sixtegum hida, oððe ðolige be healfre þære bote.

§5. Gif borenran wifmen ðis gelimpe, weaxe sio bot be ðam were.

(11) If anyone seizes by the breast a young woman belonging to the commons, he shall pay her 5 shillings compensation.

§1. If he throws her down but does not lie with her, he shall pay [her] 10 shillings compensation.

§ 2. If he lies with her, he shall pay [her] 60 shillings compensation.

§3. If another man has previously lain with her, then the compensation shall be half this [amount].

§4. If she is accused [of having previously lain with a man], she shall clear herself by [an oath of] 60 hides, or lose half the compensation due to her.

§5. If this [outrage] is done to a woman of higher birth, the compensation to be paid shall increase according to the wergild.[66]

The collocation of these two clauses is insufficient to assert that Alfred was legislating against Anglo-Saxon non-Christian religious practices that included ritual prostitution or rape, but it seems certain that such practices cannot have been tolerated under such a legislative regime. It is perhaps possible that this represents fear-mongering, using the tales of the excesses of those non-Christian communities of the past (and thereby referencing those of the present – the invading Danes, and further aiding in Alfred's attempt to establish the English as the new Israelites) to motivate the population to more rigorously Christian living. Reynolds shows that the archaeological record is similarly allusive as regards adultery:

Sexual deviancy, such as adultery, incest and same-sex relationships could be suggested as possible explanations for such burial deposits [triple burials], although legal decrees only exist with regard to adultery (II C 53),

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[66] Attenborough, *Laws*, pp. 70-71.

where the nose and ears were to be removed, and the breaking of the vow of celibacy taken by those in holy orders, where burial in consecrated ground was to be forfeited (I Edm 1). The Late Anglo-Saxon laws differentiate between the mode of execution of female and male slaves for theft. Women were to be burnt, whereas men were to be stoned (IV Ath 6.5 and 6.7).[67]

Reynolds implies that the relative infrequency of female burials may be explained by the practice of burning female adulterers, and notes that the surviving evidence is mainly to be found in the South and the South-East, which correlates with the kingdoms of the kings discussed above.

The appearance of these clauses implies that into the late-ninth-century interaction with devils was being allusively regulated in secular law even if Dendle is strictly correct in his assertion that there is no legislation for dealing with a devil should one be caught. From the partial picture that can be drawn from the evidence of the early law codes it seems apparent that the devil and, in particular, idolatry are considered real and present dangers to legislators' interests. The devil itself, though, appears seldom. To take the point that Dendle is implicitly making in his comment, it is possible that as far as the legislators were concerned the devil provided a more practical tool in motivation as an allusion to punishment beyond the physical world than would sanctions in this world. By describing practices that included devotion to non-Christian gods as devotion to devils, the laws normalize Christianity and "other" the non-Christian religions, which is the genesis of the later strategy of using clauses that stress the unity of the communities for which the legislation is provided at the start of law codes to exaggerate the community aspect of them. In the introduction to his law code, Alfred, providing a free paraphrase of Old Testament laws, draws on similar ideas to those found in the earlier laws through different words: 'Ne swergen ge næfre under hæðne godas, ne on nanum ðingum ne cleopien ge to him. Þis sindan ða domas þe se ælmihtega God self sprecende wæs to Moyse & him bebead to healdanne.' ('Never swear to

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[67] Andrew Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 170-71.

heathen gods, nor in any things call out to them. These are the laws that the almighty God himself said to Moses, and bade him to hold to.' *Alfred-Ine*, introduction to Alfred's laws, clause 48).[68] The position of this clause at the end of the list gives it an emphasis that may reflect the relatively recent eradication (or at least severe undermining) of idolatrous practices in the kingdoms with which the laws are concerned.

Later laws preserve this concern, though possibly as a relic of the models that they imitate. In *V Æthelred* (dated to 1008,[69] Cameron number B 14.23), for instance, a rejection of idolatry forms part of the opening dedication:

> (1) Þis þonne ærest, þæt we ealle ænne God lufian 7 wurðian 7 ænne Cristendom georne healdan 7 ælcne hæðendom mid ealle awurpan;
> (1) The first provision is: that we all love and honour one God, and zealously observe one Christian faith, and wholly renounce all heathen practices.[70]

Similarly, the second clause considers interaction between Christian and heathen communities:

> (2) 7 ures hlafordes gerædnes 7 his witena is, þæt man Cristene men 7 unforworhte of earde ne sylle, ne huru on hæðene þeode, ac beorge

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[68] *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, p. 42. My translation.

[69] A. J. Robertson, *The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1925), p. 49.

[70] Ibid., pp. 78-79. This phrase is echoed in the opening of *VI Æthelred*: '7 ænne God rihtlice lufian 7 weorðian 7 ænne Christendom anrædlice healdan 7 ælcne hæþendom georne forbugan' (and duly love and honour one God, and unanimously uphold one Christian faith, and zealously renounce all heathen practices), which is also echoed in the same law-code's sixth clause: '7 la gyt we willað biddan freonda gehwylcne 7 eal folc eac læran georne, þæt hy inwerde heortan ænne God lufian 7 ælcne hæþendom georne ascunian.' (And now behold, we will beseech all our friends and likewise earnestly enjoin upon the whole nation, to love one God from their inmost heart and zealously shun all heathen practices). An almost identical clause exists in *X Æthelred* clause 1. *VII Æthelred* contains a clause with a similar thrust but far more practical implications: '(3) Et praecipimus, ut in omni congreatione cantetur cotidie communiter pro rege et omni populo suo una missa ad matutinalem missam quae inscripta est "contra paganos."' ((3) And we decree that in every religious foundation a mass entitled "Against the heathen" shall be sung daily at matins, by the whole community, on behalf of the king and all his people.) By relegating this from the public church ceremonies to the cloister, and shifting it from the vernacular to Latin, *VII Æthelred* stands as clear evidence that idolatry and heathenism are now entirely 'other' in the societies to which the laws pertain, and is considered a, indeed the principal, threat to the integrity of the faith. Ibid., pp. 90-91, 92-93, 110-11.

georne þæt man þa sawla ne forfare þe Crist mid his agenum life gebohte.

(2) And it is the decree of our lord and his councillors, that Christian men who are innocent of crime shall not be sold out of the land, least of all to the heathen, but care shall diligently be taken that the souls which Christ bought with his own life be not destroyed.[71]

*Æthelred V* is the first of six primarily ecclesiastical law codes attributed to Æthelred,[72] in which context, renouncing heathen practices seems redundant. These clauses are placed at the opening of the law code in a position of importance but also possibly the part most likely to contain truisms rather than complicated or nuanced laws. There is none of the anxiety conveyed in earlier law codes in this clause, rather this seems like a formula to incite a feeling of communality: at the opening of the law code its author is emphasizing that which all members of this community hold true, and just as this holds true, so the later clauses are given an implied veracity through the universality of this opening. More relevant to the consideration of interactions between members of this self-consciously Christian community and heathens is the clause regarding the selling of Christian slaves to non-Christian communities, which are explicitly associated with being 'earde' or 'over the waters'. The implication is that there are no (known or tolerated) non-Christian communities within the kingdom, and clearly expresses Alfred's anxieties regarding the safety of Christians in the contemporary situation, with a strong Viking presence in the North, whose practices Wulfstan felt obliged to deal with in later texts.[73]

*Æthelred V* also refers to devilish deeds in clause 25:

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[71] Ibid., pp. 78-79. As with clause one above, this clause is echoed in *VI Æthelred*, at clause nine: '7 witena gerædnes is, þæt man Christene men 7 unforworhte of eared ne sylle, ne huru on hæþene þeode; ac beorge man georne þæt man þa sawla ne forfare þe Crist mid is agenum life gebohte.' (And it is the decree of the councillors that Christian men who are innocent of crime shall not be sold out of the land, least of all to the heathen, but care shall diligently be taken that the souls which Christ bought with his own life be not destroyed.) Ibid., pp. 94-95.

[72] Ibid., p. 49.

[73] See Joyce Tally Lionarons, *The Homiletic Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan: A Critical Study*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 2010), Chapter 7, pp. 147-63, and below, Chapter 5.

(25) 7 egeslice manswara 7 deofolice dæda on morðweorcan 7 on manslihtan, on stalan 7 on strudungan, on gitsungan 7 on gifernessan, on ofermettan 7 on oferfillan, on swiccæftan 7 on mistlican lagbrycan, on hadbrican 7 on æwbrican [7 on freolsbrycan, on fæstenbrycan] 7 on mæniges cynnes misdædan.

(25) and horrible perjuries and devilish deeds, such as murders and homicides, thefts and robberies, covetousness and greed, gluttony and intemperance, frauds and various breaches of the law, violations of holy orders and of marriage, [breaches of festivals and of fasts], and misdeeds of many kinds.[74]

No doubt, the useful alliteration of 'deofollice dæda' goes some way towards explaining the inclusion of the phrase in this clause, but there are striking differences in this clause from the way in which 'deofol-' words were being used in the earlier laws. Firstly, there is no indication of any anxiety over idolatry. Just as in the opening, the 'hæðene þeod' are being represented as "other" to create a communality amongst those to whom the law-code applies; here the misdeeds are given abstract attributes by being associated with the devil. The devil, in fact, does not come into the equation of the execution of this law, rather it is being invoked as a vivifying trope to lend emphasis to the deviance that the legislator is implying is inherent in contravening the laws.

The alliteration should be considered as a stylistic device to lend integrity to the laws, a "ring of truth". That these laws are being composed in a manner sympathetic to an audience or reader is important for understanding the use of the imagery of 'deofollice dæda', firstly as it implies an audience, which is not immediately apparent from internal evidence in the early law codes. Secondly, the alliteration, longer clauses, and intensifying imagery, all point to a significant move away from the simple syntax of the earlier laws. Whereas *Wihtræd* reads as an exercise in supreme clarity, seemingly designed to be concise and clear rather than

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[74] Robertson, *The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I*, pp. 86-87. Apart from the inversion of the order to 'æwbrican 7 on hadbrican' and the addition of 'cyricrenan' (sacrilege) to the final clause, this is copied verbatim in *VI Æthelred* the second half of clause 28 (2).

intense, these laws are composed in such a way that their functional nature is not allowed to impinge on their performativity. It seems that these are laws to be remembered at the expense of their enforceability: the imprecision of 'gitsungan 7 on gifernessan, on ofermettan 7 on oferfillan' and 'mæniges cynnes misdædan' is an entirely new feature in legal engagement with the devil and simplifies the situations they describe to the point that the law ceases to be a meted justice and rather becomes a list of those transgressions which will result in reprisal. These do not represent instances of crimes that can be identified and punished, but rather modes of being that are to be avoided.

Some interesting associations are manifest in both this version and the correlative clause in *VI Æthelred*, as this clause appears immediately prior to a list of clauses that are (in substance) advice to the executive of the kingdom regarding coinage, the navy, fortified bridges, and the punishments for deserters.[75] This progression is notable as it indicates a move from the abstract and general to the specific (the law code stipulates that warships should be made ready shortly after Easter every year). This progression induces an impression of intensifying the legal solidity of the stipulations that the document lays out, with a timely reminder of the moral obligations of those obeying these laws. By moving from the ill-defined 'deofollice dæda' to the articles regarding the internal and external security of the kingdom, and implicitly, good governance, the law code echoes the morality of the opening clauses. By discussing Christianity, an abstract (if immediate) concept, in the specific as a commonality amongst the populace (both the law-enforcers and those upon whom the law is enforced), the opening induces a sense that it is part of being a Christian to abide by, and enforce, the laws that follow. At this point the author uses the same device for a different purpose: we hold in common the imperative not to perform 'deofollice dæda' (the abstract) with which one may associate the failure to perform the specific tasks laid out in what follows.

The function of early laws in a late context is not easily discerned but the continuous nature of the tradition, the vocabulary used in self- and inter-reference

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[75] Ibid., pp. 100-103, clauses 31-35.

(such as 'æ' and 'þeaw') and the deployment of early laws and law formulas to lend veracity to their successors all point to a strong element of retention in the set of information known by all people in late Anglo-Saxon England as represented by the law codes. Fortunately it is not a pre-requisite of their utility to the current argument that they be accessible to all members of all communities in late Anglo-Saxon England, but rather that the heritage they point to, and the imposition or appeal of that heritage in the post-Alfredian era is demonstrable. In terms of the devil, two key points have been established: the idiomatic use of the devil as a proxy for illicit religious practices and, in the later period, as a vivifying trope; and secondly the compound 'deofolgyld' for referring to all non-Christian practices and 'othering' in law those who do not share the faith.

## 1.2 The devil in charters

The charters, as evidence, are slightly more difficult to read than are the laws. As these documents are highly formulaic, instances of the deployment of the devil to be found here can, with certainty, only be said to reflect the idiolectal usage of an individual (the person responsible for the form of words of the charter itself). With less certainty, though still within the realms of probability, it can be said that such appearances must have been either powerful enough to act as a warning, or be so formulaic as to be commonplaces. In either case this essentially secular context does provide some reflection of the way in which the devil was understood as an enemy of law and rights.[76]

The fullest and most explicit deployment of the devil in the charters appears in *King Edgar's Privilege to New Minster* and a similarly expansive deployment is to be found in a grant of lands by Æthelræd II preserved in National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Peniarth MS 390, but these two Anglo-Latin examples are exceptional across the canon of charters. In the vernacular charters a formula emerges of the devil as the presumed instigator of any perversion of the function of the document.[77] The appearances of the devil prior to the mid-tenth century are formulaic and in forms that become more common during the period of the Benedictine reformers. There are two early vernacular cases of specific interest; a charter from King Æthelberht to the Church of Sherborne (Sawyer 333) dated to 864 and in a boundary clause (S452) of a charter of King Æthelstan. Towards the end of S333 the formula appears:

> Gyf þanne hwilc man to ðan geþristlæce oððe mid deofles searwum to ðam beswicen sye þ*æt* he þis on ænigum þingum lytlum oððe myclum þence to gebrecanne oððe to onwendanne wite he þonne þ*æt* he þæs agieldende sie

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[76] It is interesting to consider the parallels here with Alfred's innovations in making transgression of the law a trespass against the king's person and the state more generally. The concept of perverting the right order of things underpins both deployments and their similar ninth-century contexts bear consideration. See Pratt, 'Written Law and the Communication of Authority in Tenth-Century England', especially pp. 336-38.

[77] For a full analysis of these two deployments of the devil and their interpretation with respect to the Old English *Genesis A*, see Johnson, 'Studies in the Literary Career of the Fallen Angels: The Devil and his Body in Old English literature', pp. 53-58.

beforan Cristes þrymsetle þonne ealle heofonware 7 eorðware on his andweardnesse beoð onstyrede 7 onhrerede nymðe he hit ær her on worl[o]de mid ryhte gebete.[78]

But if any man be so presumptuous or through the devil's devices be deceived so that he this [charter] in any manner, little or great, think to break or to unwind, he must know that he must make atonement before Christ's throne when all heaven's inhabitants and earth's inhabitants be stirred and excited by his presence, unless he make just atonement before in the world.

This idea of 'deofles searwum' is also found in the earlier (Alfredian) translation of Bede, and cognates such as 'feondes searwum' in translations of Gregory's *Dialogues* and some poetry too. The association of the devil with manipulation of fact and of the law has interesting parallels in biblical literature where the devil's schemes are often interpreted as 'deofles costnung' (devil's temptations) or 'deofles cræft' (devil's crafts) or 'deofles tihtung' (devil's instigation) and where the Satan performs the accuser and the law interpreter role as he appears in, for example, Job.[79]

A similarly idiomatic, but functionally distinct usage exists in a boundary clause (S452) of a charter of King Æthelstan dated to around the second quarter of the tenth century. Here the reference appears in the opening address of the clause:

On þam halgan naman ures Hælendes Cristes. se ðe us gesceop þa ða we sylfe næron, 7 us eft alysde mid his agenum life. ða ða [we] fordone wæron þurh ðæs deofles lare. 7 mid ealle forscylgode into þam ecan susle. ac mid his myccle arfæstnesse us alysede of þam. Nu ic Æðelstan...[80]

In the holy name of our Saviour Christ, who shaped us when we ourselves were not, and who redeemed us with his own life, when we were brought

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[78] *Diplomatarium Anglicum Ævi Saxonici*, ed. by Benjamin Thorpe, (London: Macmillan, 1865), p. 125.

[79] Job 1:6-13. See below, Chapter 4, especially Section 4.2.3.

[80] *Diplomatarium Anglicum Ævi Saxonici*, p. 176.

into ruin through the devil's lore, and  all condemned into the eternal hell, but freed from that [condemnation] by his great mercy. Now I, Æthelstan…

Such a formulaic use of the devil as an opponent to mankind against whom we have Christ as protector is a similarly idiomatic use of the concept of the devil reminiscent of that found in *Alfred-Ine* above.[81]

Both cases are perhaps of more interest to the scholar of the training regimes of those who wrote the charters than they are to understanding the devil in local contexts. It is important to note, however, that these charters are constructed to perform a function in a community. The association (in S333) of any transgression of the terms of the charter with the devil's temptations is evidence that the individual who chose the form of words to be used either believed the devil actively engaged with men in order to pervert their will, or felt that the association was useful to the function of the document he was creating. The latter case indicates more about the intentions of the individual writing than about the function of the document. The reference to the devil is not part of the function of the document but rather represents an inclusive approach and an appeal to authenticity through tradition. Rather than suggesting an active role for the devil in the subversion of the document, the examples of S452, S567, S574, and S817, all later than the functional devil of S333, use the communality of shared belief by those to whom the documents pertain in order to enforce their efficacy. This method is painting as un-Christian the subversion of the document and lending the implicit support of the Church and God to the terms of the document.

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[81] Similar references can be found in charters from King Eadred, Sawyer 567 (A.D. 955) 'deofles lare', and Sawyer 574 (A.D. 957) 'deofles searu cræft', King Eadgar, Sawyer 817 (A.D. 963-75), 'deofles lare'. Quotations taken from ibid., with the exception of Sawyer 574, which is to be found in *Cartularium Saxonicum*, ed. by W. de Gray Birch, (London: Clark, 1893).

1.3  Conclusions

These texts perform functional roles and are part of a mutable tradition of law in Anglo-Saxon England. Their value in the context of a thematic investigation is that they offer an index which, though it behaves according to its own influences too, can be considered to give a good reading of the extent to which the devil appeared in the culture *per se*, offering a litmus test of incidence and interpretation of the devil especially in those contexts where the devil is not necessary to the function of the documents.  The fact that these texts have no reason to engage directly with the theme of the current study further aids the investigation as the changes in the deployment of the devil are probably reflective of underlying cultural changes in perceptions of the devil.

The indications are that the devil is being used rhetorically, to motivate and threaten, especially when used formulaically. In those instances that could not be described as formulaic, the direct association of non-Christian religious practices with the devil is an indication of the politics of conversion in the early period, a battle clearly won by the time of Æthelred, in which context Wulfstan can use the community's Christianity as a rally-call to their adherence to his laws.

The diachronic view offered by the law codes is not, however, a perfect measure of the themes of this investigation, and though we can discuss 'cultural changes' in the abstract according to the evidence of these texts, the allusive and scant nature of the evidence to be discerned here helps little in terms of understanding the nuances of Anglo-Saxon readings of the devil. Rather, we should consider the analysis above as a reflection of the extent to which the devil is ingrained in the cultural mindset. The analysis has shown that though occasionally human interaction with, and especially devotion to, the devil is being regulated by the laws, the deployment of the devil in these texts speaks more of its perceived efficacy as a motivator, as a threat which can be cited in order to regulate or change behaviour. In order to describe engagement with the devil we must consider texts that affect the culture as well as those that reflect it. We must consider to what extent each text reflects the society in which it was used, and how, and in what contexts, public access to text and literature took place.

2.0 Contemporary influences on understanding of the devil

Returning to the ecclesiastical establishment, and its teaching, offers more sturdy ground for a discussion of the way in which the populace of Anglo-Saxon England learned about the devil in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Considering popular worship, Jolly's approach finds its roots in cultural rather than Church history, and her investigation leads her to conclude that the tenth and eleventh centuries are 'a dynamic phase for popular religion as an acculturating process.'[82] She continues:

> [...] religious ferment is clearly evident in the tenth and eleventh centuries in the growth of local churches, particularly in the Danelaw. Typically a lone priest served in these new, lay-founded churches, usually a man of relatively low origin who had a rudimentary education, was isolated from the church hierarchy and the large collegiate minsters, and was called upon to meet the daily, practical needs of an agricultural population. In this environment, and through this kind of clerical agency interacting with local folk culture and domestic life, popular religion formed.[83]

It is to these communities that we must turn in order to understand the way in which the laity approached Christian learning in the late Anglo-Saxon period, or more precisely the way in which Christian learning approached the laity. As new, lay-founded institutions emerged, the demand for texts which allow an ecclesiastic to provide pastoral care to the members of this class of church must have been voracious.  At the same time, it is in the reconciliation of the type of religious experience envisioned by the late Anglo-Saxon writers and spread through their texts, and the practicalities for these local priests in providing pastoral care for the communities in which they practise, that the local practices suggested by Gatch and expanded upon by Jolly were able to manifest themselves.[84]

This fracturing of the older, more unified, models of teaching beyond the major ecclesiastical centres leads to a change in the period in how teaching took

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[82] Jolly, *Popular Religion*, p. 39.
[83] Ibid., p. 39.
[84] See above, at n. 23.

place. Considering the emergence of parochial worship and the Parish as an administrative unit, Blair notes the difficulties left by the absence of coherence in the evidence from 850 to 1100:

> There is a big discrepancy between the architectural and archaeological sources, which show fast-growing numbers of small but permanent churches set in graveyards serving ordinary lay communities, and the written sources, which barely recognize a tier below mother-parish level.[85]

Combining these forms of information is necessary in order to best explain the likely context of vernacular worship, while accepting the poor survival of texts outside of large repositories. Though at times this involves arguing from an absence of evidence, i.e. the great disparity between the implications of the surviving archaeology and the surviving literature as identified by Blair, there is little, if any, evidence of absence in the written resources available to these smaller communities. Reconstructing how these resources reached and affected their audiences is an area that requires more study.

### 2.1.1 Reading churches

Thus far we have considered the way in which information about the devil permeated late Anglo-Saxon textual and administrative culture, and indeed, a reading of the devil to be taken by an individual late Anglo-Saxon land-owner could be established without any need for them to have set foot in a church at all. The opportunities to do so, however, would have been rapidly increasing during the late-tenth and eleventh centuries. A combination of small proto-parish churches and older foundations, the *monasteria*, is to be found across the country. The scale of church building during the tenth and eleventh centuries is staggering and it is this facet of the evidence that led Wilcox to describe the situation as one of

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[85] John Blair, 'From *Hyrness* to Parish: The Formation of Parochial Identities c.850-1100', in *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 426-504, at p. 426. The materiality of the churches themselves, being of permanent materials would have offered a canvas on which interpretations of the devil could find a place, see below, Section 2.1.1.

'explo[ding ...] pastoral models'.[86] Taylor and Taylor's large-scale study of church architecture in England showed that there are material remains still visible in Britain of over 400 permanent churches that were built in the period leading up to 1100.[87] To corroborate this scale, by the time of Domesday (1086), over 2000 churches or churches with priests were recorded, and the list is undoubtedly partial.[88] Each of these churches represents a desire by a person or group for a permanent structure, dedicated to the Church, for the community in which it is set. However, it is not simply the case that churches are built for the good of the community, and it is not at all clear how the relationship between these physical structures and the hierarchy of the ecclesiastical establishment manifested itself. [89] There is also little understanding as regards how these churches have left so few marks on the written record.

It is interesting to consider what would have faced Anglo-Saxons when they did enter a church. Wall paintings are known to have existed in Anglo-Saxon churches, though evidence for them is scant at best. Two instances of which I am aware are pertinent to the current discussion: Bede's description of the panel boards brought back to Wearmouth-Jarrow from Rome by Benedict Biscop, and the wall paintings to be found at the church in Nether Wallop, Hampshire.[90]

Bede, in his *Historia Abbattum*, explains that when returning from his fourth journey to Rome (probably in 676), Benedict Biscop brought with him 'picturae imaginum sanctarum' (paintings of sacred images) which, Meyvaert notes, is the first mention of paintings in connection with Benedict's journeys or

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[86] Jonathan Wilcox, 'The Use of Ælfric's Homilies: MSS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 85 and 86 in the Field', in *A Companion to Ælfric,* ed. by Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 345-68, p. 347.

[87] H. M. Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*,  (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965-78).

[88] Blair, 'The Birth and Growth of Local Churches, c.850-1100', p. 369. The record is known to be partial as some counties returned no data.

[89] Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, especially Blair, 'The Birth and Growth of Local Churches, c.850-1100'; Blair, 'From *Hyrness* to Parish: The Formation of Parochial Identities c.850-1100'.

[90] Paul Meyvaert, 'Bede and the Church Paintings at Wearmouth-Jarrow', *ASE,* 8 (1979), pp. 63-77; Richard Gem and Pamela Tudor-Craig, 'A 'Winchester School' Wall-painting at Nether Wallop, Hampshire', *ASE,* 9 (1980), pp. 115-36.

indeed with Wearmouth.[91] Included among these are images of the visions of St

John's Apocalypse. Meyvaert is inclined to reject the hypothesis of Adolph

Goldschmidt, also expressed by T. Frimmel, that these images refer to manuscript

illuminations intended to be models for the images to be recreated in-situ.[92]

Regardless of whether Meyvaert is correct in this position (preferring the

hypothesis of panel paintings that could be transported from Rome wholesale), the

fact of images being a part of church decoration in England is established from this

point.

Closer to the period in consideration, the evidence from the church at

Nether Wallop indicates that manuscript style certainly crossed over into wall-

paintings. On the east wall of the original building, above the chancel arch, there is

an image of angels supporting a mandorla, executed in fresco, which relies on the

linear technique of the Winchester School of drawings.[93] Gem and Tudor-Craig

state that

> [t]he legitimacy of comparison between Winchester manuscripts and works
> of art in different media from the same neighbourhood is confirmed by the
> family resemblance between pre-1000 Winchester manuscripts, the Nether
> Wallop angels and the ivory fragment of two flying angels said to have been
> found in a garden near St Cross at Winchester.[94]

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[91] Meyvaert, 'Bede and the Church Paintings at Wearmouth-Jarrow', p. 66.

[92] Ibid., p. 67 n. 2. Like Meyvaert, I am reliant on Nolan to for this information, and also on Meyvaert for Goldschmidt's view. Barbara Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 56, n. 34, Adolph Goldschmidt, *An Early Manuscript of the Æsop Fables of Avianus and Related Manuscripts*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947), pp. 33-34.

[93] Gem and Tudor-Craig, 'A 'Winchester School' Wall-painting at Nether Wallop, Hampshire', pp. 126-27.

[94] Ibid., p. 128. Note also the painted figure, a nimbed angel, at Deerhurst, Gloucestershire, described in Steve Bagshaw, Richard Bryant, and Michael Hare, 'The Discovery of an Anglo-Saxon Painted Figure at St Mary's Church, Deerhurst, Gloucestershire', *The Antiquaries Journal,* 86 (2006), pp. 66-109, and the wider use of coloured decoration at the church in Richard Gem, Emily Howe, and Richard Bryant, 'The Ninth-Century Polychrome Decoration at St Mary's Church, Deerhurst', *The Antiquaries Journal,* 88 (2008), pp. 109-64. To this corpus we can also add the recently discovered 'Lichfield Angel', a painted funery monument the stratigraphy of whose discovery indicates that it was buried no later than the ninth century, and may predate this period by some margin. The angel's polychromy indicates that it drew on a similar palette to that of the animal heads at Deerhurst, Warwick Rodwell and others, 'The Lichfield Angel: A Spectacular Anglo-Saxon Painted Sculpture', *The Antiquaries Journal,* 88 (2008), pp. 48-108 at pp. 56, 63-64, 93. On the

This position implies that the culture of representational art is unified across media and so a consideration of manuscript images as influencing the populace of late Anglo-Saxon England need not be confined to readers of manuscript witnesses that survive, but rather can be extended, if tentatively, to a lay audience. Gem and Tudor-Craig note that the only other late Anglo-Saxon cycle of wall paintings for which evidence survives is reported in documentary sources and was executed at the chapel of St Denis at Wilton Abbey, dedicated in 984. Although no evidence for images of devils survives from the period, the optimistic note on which Gem and Tudor-Craig finish, along with the prolific church-building that occurred in the eleventh century and in executed more permanent fabric, offers the possibility that depictions of at least apocalyptic scenes could well have been relatively ubiquitous and displayed in situations of public access.[95]

The influence of images, it has been suggested, may go wider than simply a passive engagement in the context of either a manuscript or a church, as Brantley has suggested that one such image may have been influential in regard to the composition of the Old English *Descent into Hell*.[96] If this is the case it is interesting to consider the extent to which visual culture could have had an impact on a lay viewer of artistic representations, though we are unlikely to be able to offer more than hypotheses.

The popularity of devil images in visual culture more generally is attested by the wide influence of the Utrecht Psalter in manuscript images. The Harley Psalter, one of three surviving early copies of the Utrecht Psalter, extends the vivacity, activity and urgency of the figures of the original to depict scenes 'swelling with crowds and activity, [that] are more tumultuous, breaking out of the

relation of the carving to manuscript depictions, see Michelle Brown, 'The Lichfield Angel and the Manuscript Context: Lichfield as a Centre of Insular Art', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association,* 160 (2007), pp. .

[95] 'If this was the standard available to a parish church, what must the Minsters in Winchester itself have been like?' Gem and Tudor-Craig, 'A 'Winchester School' Wall-painting at Nether Wallop, Hampshire', p. 134.

[96] Jessica Brantley, 'The Iconography of the Utrecht Psalter and the Old English *Descent into Hell*', *ASE,* (1999), pp. 43-63. See also Raw, 'Pictures: the Books of the Unlearned?'.

frame and overlapping the text.'[97] The images in the Harley Psalter are executed by ten different artists over the life of the manuscript (from ca. 1010-1150), and Semple's analysis indicates that the artists approached their work as contributory and interpretive rather than as an act of copying. One such artist, Artist A 'gave a more explicit reality to his demons by adding talons, claws, breasts and genitalia [...] 'His demons were made more fearful to behold and more terrible to suffer under''.[98] Similarly Artist F contrived to create 'bulbous and surreal landscapes [which] are pocked with [...] dark marks (68v and 72r), some of which are clearly fissures, vents or chimneys into the earth (65r), from which smoke or steam sometimes issues (68v) [...] On 73r [...] a demon is hooking a man, intending to drag him into a pit in the earth depicted beneath a fissure'.[99] Semple suggests that these images represent artists reconciling the images that are their sources with their knowledge of the function and form of devils through contextual information, such as burial practices.[100]

In the case of visual culture, questions of reach and audience are difficult to answer, but the evidence cited here gives grounds to consider that it was probably formative where it was accessible. Unfortunately the evidence also indicates that establishing where it was in fact accessible is impractical. The role of visual culture is certainly greater than strictly confined interpretations of the audiences of surviving manuscripts would imply, but to what extent it is universal is impossible to determine. It is interesting to note, however, that a parish church close to both Ælfric and his bishop Sigeric contains images that are in the style of contemporary manuscript practices. Furthermore, the evidence from Bede implies that there was precedent dating back three hundred years for images in churches that were apocalyptic in their theme.

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[97] Sarah Semple, 'Illustrations of Damnation in Late Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts', *ASE,* 32 (2003), pp. 231-45, p. 233.

[98] Ibid., p. 233, the quotation is from William Noel, *The Harley Psalter*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 11.

[99] Semple, 'Illustrations of Damnation in Late Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts', p. 236.

[100] Semple sees a relationship between these fissures and barrow burial sites for criminals, and between some of the tortures the devils inflict on their victims and physical penalties for criminals enshrined in the law-codes. See also Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs*. For a discussion of the range and stylistic development of visual culture in the manuscript illustrations of the period, see Francis Wormald, *English Drawings of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1952).

### 2.1.2 Reading texts and texts' readers

Returning to evidence from the ecclesiastical texts, between the lines of Ælfric and Wulfstan, Jolly suggests 'we can gain a partial picture of a rural priesthood relatively isolated from ecclesiastical connections, struggling to carry out the simplest duties of their calling.'[101] These are the priests that would have mediated most knowledge, and certainly all specifically textual knowledge, about the devil to the laity. Their task in the community was a complicated one: priests were selected from among the population of the diocese and from the canons and other ecclesiastical literature it is clear that there was a preference for individuals known locally in the decision of who was to be promoted to the rank of priest, but they were still responsible to individuals outside of that context.[102] The Bishop and the (often secular) proprietor of the church selected the new priest. In some cases these were one and the same individual, where the Bishop was also the landowner (which simplified matters), but in others it could be the case that once chosen, a priest found his loyalties pulled in two directions. There are instances too where the landowner is a bishop of another diocese, further complicating the matter for the priest in question.[103] The struggle that, Jolly suggests, priests encountered may well have been partially due to the wide array of expectations placed on them as well as their own sense of their responsibilities.

Evoking an image of the everyday business of lay and clerical worship in Anglo-Saxon England is a complicated task because the activities of the clergy are poorly represented in the historical record. There is limited evidence of their activities, and where it does appear it often comes from a biased voice. Barrow explains:

> The Clergy of late Anglo-Saxon England have not received the most
> favourable of presses [...] Too often they are defined for us by the much
> more literate monks of the Benedictine reform movement, who, although
> they formed only a small part of the late Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical

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[101] Jolly, *Popular Religion*, p. 62.
[102] Ibid., pp. 62-63.
[103] Ibid., pp. 62-63.

establishment, set the tone and the agenda for the rest from the reign of Edgar onwards.[104]

Like Jolly, Barrow emphasises the stresses between loyalties for parish clergy. She suggests that there are three main methods of recruitment of clergy: family networking and inheritance, purchase of churches, and patronage by secular nobles (including the king). Barrow notes:

> Bishops in tenth- and eleventh-century England seem to have had very varying influence over the clergy in their proprietary minster churches [...] [o]ver household clerks rewarded with small manors, and over the clergy serving small churches on their estates, their influence would have been considerable, but their powers over clergy in the service of kings or thegns is less clear.[105]

Barrow prefaces her analysis with a cautionary note: such is the paucity of evidence for clergy in this period that she can only offer hypotheses. The clerical landscape she describes, however, fundamentally accords with Jolly's view of priests with little or no formal requirements for training and considerable pressure upon the traditional church hierarchy from secular patrons. It is difficult to discern how these priests learned their craft: what was the source of learning about all Christian matters, including the devil, for those teaching in the parishes and in other contexts outside of large (monastic and cathedral) institutions?

Elsewhere, Barrow notes that '[w]here we have information about the fathers of Anglo-Saxon clergy and bishops, which is, admittedly, only rarely, they were often clerics themselves', continuing '[t]he father-to-son succession pattern provided a ready-made form of clerical education: sons could have learned chant, rites and book-learning from their fathers as they grew up, and this may possibly explain why the only schools we know much about in later Anglo-Saxon England

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[104] Julia Barrow, 'The Clergy in English Dioceses c. 900-c. 1066', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England,* ed. by Francesca Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 17-26, p. 17.
[105] Ibid., p. 24.

were monastic.'[106] Such a model would naturally both preserve that which was taught initially and have no way of correcting error without subsequent intervention from the hierarchy of the Church. The interest the devil excited would have been a likely location for these errors because of the paradoxes and ambiguities through which the devil operates. This situation accords with Ælfric's criticisms of the clergy.[107] The variance in the priests' ability to fulfil their pastoral role is recorded in the writings of Bede, Ælfric and others. Using Ælfric's *Pastoral Letters* as her starting point, Hill notes:

> If we wish to take an optimistic view, we can point to [the letters'] liturgical elements, for these assume that priests can exercise a considerable degree of liturgical competence, both on special occasions and on a daily basis, that they have access to liturgical texts, and an ability to identify and employ readings, antiphons and the like which are often referred to in familiar and thus rather cryptic ways [...] Against this, however, one has to set the somewhat hectoring comments on the practical behaviour of priests and the poor knowledge and understanding that the letters imply.[108]

Ælfric's letters indicate that these concerns are pertinent to him as an abbot and as their author, but also to the bishops to whom the letters are addressed and in whose name, and sometimes voice, the copies of these texts were delivered to (ill-defined) audiences; Bishop Wulfsige of Sherborne, and Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester and Archbishop of York.

Another possibility for learning the priest's craft is attendance at monastic schools, as in the later case of St Wulfstan of Worcester, but, without connection to the bishop, it is unlikely that education alone was sufficient. The involvement of the bishop extends beyond the act of ordination,  and reform involves re-

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[106] Julia Barrow, *Who Served the Altar at Brixworth?: Clergy in English Minsters c. 800-c. 1100*,  (Brixworth: The Friends of All Saints' Church, Brixworth, 2013), pp. 5, 7.
[107] See below, Section 2.2 at n. 136.
[108] Joyce Hill, 'Monastic Reform and the Secular Church: Ælfric's Pastoral Letters in Context', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium,* ed. by Carola Hicks (Stamford, Lincs: Paul Watkins, 1992), pp. 103-18, pp. 109-10.

engagement with an incumbent group of priests as well as changes to the training of the incoming set.

We should also not dismiss the role of monks in providing pastoral care to lay communities. Though the texts to which monks had access are readily discernible, monks' use of those texts, beyond use in contexts defined by monastic rules, or as exemplars for making further copies and as lectern copies, is less well attested in the manuscript record. To whom monks were reading these texts, and what function the texts performed for the monks and their audiences is less well understood. The summary of Gatch's work (provided below) provides a restrictive reading that establishes the minimum possible scale of reading taking place in the cloister.[109]

At the other end of the spectrum of possibilities, Thacker suggests that monks may have been involved to quite an extreme extent in the provision of pastoral care for the communities that surrounded their own, implying a considerably more public use of the texts. Thacker suggests that Bede's view of monasticism seems conflicted today though it did not to the scholar:

> [d]espite his emphasis on the need for personal asceticism and on the achievement of sanctity through withdrawal from the world, it seems never to have occurred to Bede to question the involvement of English *monasteria* in missionary and pastoral activity.[110]

Bede's view is heavily influenced by monastic teaching, both through his own position as monk and through his immersion in the work of Gregory, the 'monk-pope' as Thacker refers to him. Despite this position, which emphasises a contemplative and eremitic lifestyle, Thacker describes how 'Bede envisaged the relationship between the pastor-preacher and his flock in very monastic terms', suggesting 'there is no doubt that he [Bede] intended his monastically trained

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[109] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, see discussion below, Section 2.3.
[110] Alan Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish,* ed. by John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp. 137-70, p. 153.

teachers and preachers to have an impact outside the religious communities.'[111] Supporting Thacker, Cubitt's assessment of the early clergy suggests that numerous cases of monk-priests, those with a dual function, existed, but that Bede is meticulous in expressing this where it is relevant. Even in this early period, however, Cubitt notes that the habitations of both the clergy and monks must have been diverse which blurs definitions and the implications of broad terms like 'monk' and 'priest'. She suggests that '[a]dvocates of the minster parish model prefer to see pastoral care in Anglo-Saxon England as the virtual monopoly of monastic communities, responsible for the cure of souls within large regions'.[112] It is apparent from the work of Thacker and Cubitt that when creating narratives of monks, commentators were happy to describe them as being hermits, and yet the same narratives provide evidence for engagement with the local populace and a pastoral mission beyond that which we might call eremitic.[113]

The role of monks in communicating ideas to the laity is not well understood, but anecdotal accounts confirm that such communication and teaching took place.[114] The influences on a monk-priest will have been necessarily diverse to reflect the training specific to each function. It is important to note that though the monk role takes primacy in all explicit accounts of such individuals, the fact that the accounts are recorded by monks, during a period in which the English monastic life was revered across Europe (in the time of Bede), or in the ascendant

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[111] Ibid., pp. 153, 154.

[112] Catherine Cubitt, 'The Clergy in Early Anglo-Saxon England', *Historical Research,* 78 (2005), pp. 273-87, p. 277. On the minster model and the ecclesiastical geography of late Anglo-Saxon England see the discussion in Sarah Foot, 'Anglo-Saxon Minsters: a Review of Terminology', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish,* ed. by John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp. 212-25; Blair, 'The Birth and Growth of Local Churches, c.850-1100'; Blair, 'From *Hyrness* to Parish: The Formation of Parochial Identities c.850-1100'; John Blair, 'Debate: Ecclesiastical Organization and Pastoral Care in Anglo-Saxon', *Early Medieval Europe,* 4 (1995), pp. 193-212; John Blair, 'Anglo-Saxon Minsters: A Topographical Review', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish,* ed. by John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp. 226-66; Eric Cambridge and David Rollason, 'Debate: The Pastoral Organization of the Anglo-Saxon Church: a Review of the 'Minster Hypothesis'', *Early Medieval Europe,* 4 (1995), pp. 87-104; and Michael Franklin, 'The Identification of Minsters in the Midlands', *Anglo-Norman Studies,* 7 (1984), pp. 69-87.

[113] Cubitt refers to Bede's account of Dryhthelm, a monk who had been 'priested' (quidam monachus nomine Haemgisl, presbyterus etiam), also to Felix's *Vita S. Guthlaci* where Felix describes Guthlac becoming a clerk. Cubitt, 'The Clergy in Early Anglo-Saxon England', p. 276. This provides a powerful counterpoint to Dendle's model of the 'monasteries and chapter' as the sole users of the texts that survive in these contexts. See above, at n. 18.

[114] Ibid., p. 276.

internally (during the time of the Benedictine reforms) does mitigate to some extent the certainty with which we can suggest that for the individual the monastic took primacy over the priestly. As an example, though some scholars have assumed that Wulfstan, Archbishop of York had a monastic training there is little evidence of this, none of which is explicit.[115] Given that the sources (especially the early sources) are usually so careful to emphasise the monastic, the uncertain status of Wulfstan is a puzzle. Regardless, these men, those who lived by a monastic rule, within a community, often as part of a network of communities, are the people best attested as users in the manuscript and textual record.[116] We know at least some of the manuscripts the largest of these centres produced and from that information we can derive at least an outline view of the texts to which these centres had access. The work of Gatch examined closely the contexts in which texts could be performed within such communities, so we have a fairly clear picture of the use and function of texts and text performances that were within the cloister. Dendle describes his textual analysis of the devil as being concerned with 'the literature of the monasteries and chapter houses' and so it is the devil that was perceived by these men, the monks, that has been analyzed in his work.[117] Our picture of the devil in the tenth and eleventh centuries, prior to the current study, has been described as the devil of the cloister, but this representation is likely to have had an impact wider than the critics who posited the representation acknowledge.

Taking texts, and especially texts concerning the devil, beyond the cloister is well attested by Archbishop Wulfstan's corpus, but the activity of bishops in

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[115] Bethurum assumes that he was a monk: 'He may have been abbot of a monastery before he became bishop; his training as a Benedictine in the reformed tradition makes this not unlikely.' Dorothy Bethurum, 'Wulfstan', in *Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature,* ed. by Eric Gerald Stanley (London: Thomas Nelson, 1966), pp. 210-46, p. 211. Wormald, in the opening of the most recent collection of essays on Wulfstan, comments 'there is strikingly little evidence that our Wulfstan was educated in the Æthelwoldian style, and not a lot that he was even a monk: perhaps he came from the pre-reform stage in one or other of these abbeys'. Patrick Wormald, 'Archbishop Wulfstan: Eleventh-Century State-Builder', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 9-28, p. 13

[116] The networks of monastic institutions are confirmed by such documents as the agreements of confraternity.

[117] Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, p. 17.

teaching is not particularly well recorded in the Anglo-Saxon texts themselves. In the later period, hagiographies praise the willingness of St Swithun and St Wulfstan to circulate through the dioceses as much as possible, implying that travel by the bishop within his diocese is praised as exemplary rather than ordinary.[118] Whether or not the bishops performed this function themselves, they were certainly responsible to see that it was performed on their behalf. Two generations prior to the latter of these saints, there is implicit contemporary evidence that the bishop's presence and interaction with his clergy was wanting: Ælfric emphasized the synod as an integral reform agent, and the sharing of best practice as a way of on-the-job or in-the-field training. As Jolly states: 'Ælfric urged priests to teach one another – presumably this was possible only in the collegiate setting of the minsters. Both Ælfric and Wulfstan [II, Archbishop of York and Bishop of Worcester] clearly focused on the corporate environment of the minster for educating priests'.[119] An image emerges of Ælfric as the visionary idealist, and Wulfstan as the more practical implementer, trying to put the wide-reaching and ambitious recommendations into practice in the most effective way possible. Ælfric's visionary nature is confirmed by the sizeable collection of books he expects a priest to possess, and Wulfstan's practicality by his provisions for ordaining partially trained canons during a period of prolific church building.[120] However, Jolly provides a note of caution in relating the intentions and effects of Wulfstan's practical measures: '[...] it is doubtful that these priests even came close to meeting the standards of training, books, liturgical utensils, or learning set by canon law, standards especially prominent in the reforming work of Ælfric and Wulfstan.'[121] But the fact that Wulfstan, a man who had one of the largest scriptoria in the country responsible to him (Worcester), even aspires (in the

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[118] Hagiographers were keen to single out this aspect, and Jolly points specifically to William of Malmsbury's *Life of Saint Wulfsige* and *De Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*. Jolly, *Popular Religion*, p. 62, n. 72.

[119] Ibid., p. 63.

[120] *Ælfric's Pastoral Letter for Bishop Wulfsige*, in *Councils and Synods: with Other Documents Relating to the English Chuch*, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock, M. Brett, and C. N. L. Brooke, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), pp. 191-206, cc. 52-54 at pp. 206-07. On the changing nature of churches and their function in the community see Blair, 'The Birth and Growth of Local Churches, c.850-1100', and above, Section 2.1.1.

[121] Jolly, *Popular Religion*, p. 64.

*Canons of Edgar*) to the state of having a clergy possessed of a handful of key texts implies a great deal about the uses of the surviving texts.[122]

The booklist was initially compiled by Ælfric for Bishop Wulfsige, and was repeated in correspondence to Wulfstan, who adopts it and provides a modified version in the *Canons of Edgar*. The presentation of the booklist in these contexts implies that priests were expected to be able to consult these texts on a regular basis in order to perform their priestly functions. The access they were expected to have implies some details regarding the use of these texts: the texts were intended to formalize and standardize practice across the area of their circulation; a constant requirement to refer back to them provides scope to suggest that the clergy had taken a flexible approach to their pastoral duties, allowing them to be sympathetic to local tradition. By creating and encouraging the regular use of handbooks of standard practice, Wulfstan exposes a reaction against the flexibility of the clergy, requiring more homogeneity in forms of worship as well as orthodoxy in matter. As Wilcox comments: 'Here is a context where Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* would appear to be supremely useful in the field […] [the] local priest, barely marked out from the surrounding flock, would be a perfect user for Ælfric's homilies.'[123]

Many themes have been touched upon in the preceding analysis: the incidence and nature of ecclesiastical architecture and of clergy in late Anglo-Saxon England, the nature of the Clergy's training and learning, the manner in which they engaged with the hierarchy of the Church, and the ways in which they were required to own and use texts. In discerning how these priests engaged with, and communicated, knowledge about the devil, we must ask what the texts that these priests used were and how they were communicated to the laity.

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[122] The books of a priest are referred to at cc. 32 and 34 of the *Canons of Edgar*. The booklist in 'Ælfric's Pastoral Letter for Bishop Wulfsige', is repeated in a slightly abridged form in 'Ælfric's First Old English Letter for Wulfstan'. *Councils and Synods*, pp. 191-226, cc. 52-54 at pp. 206-07 and pp. 255-302, c. 158 at pp. 291-92. See Hill, 'Monastic Reform and the Secular Church: Ælfric's Pastoral Letters in Context'.

[123] Jonathan Wilcox, 'Ælfric in Dorset and the Landscape of Pastoral Care', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England,* ed. by Francesca Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 52-62, p. 60.

2.2 Texts in their contexts

In discerning the scope of influence of the teaching of priests on the laity, the first task is to identify the texts that were available to those priests. The research of Gatch suggests that access to religious material in Anglo-Saxon England was strictly regulated by the gatekeepers of knowledge, both monastic and clerical, who mediated the popular experience of the divine. Gatch notes that Ælfric, for example, was:

> [...] scrupulously anxious that those for whom he wrote should not be given more knowledge than appertained to their rank. The preface to the *Lives of Saints* warned that certain knowledge was not suitable for the laity and hinted that Ælfric was dissatisfied with the role of translator and popularizer.[124]

This can be true of texts concerning the devil only in so far as it is true of all ecclesiastical texts in Anglo-Saxon England. Strict regulation does not preclude access, rather it defines terms in which access can be achieved, and it is striking that Gatch chooses as his example the *Lives of Saints*, long works which lend themselves to rumination within the confines of the cloister. Ælfric's anxieties regarding the texts he produced are manifest in his selective translation and in his *Preface* to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* where he exhorts later copyists to maintain the integrity of his collection of homilies.[125]

Evidence for popular access to homiletic literature is readily available from the time of Ælfric. Malcolm Godden argues that the Second Series of *Catholic Homilies* is aimed at the preacher and intends to supply him with a choice of material for use in his preaching function, whereas the First Series of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* is to be read 'as written' to the audience, a 'simple' audience

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[124] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 13.

[125] 'Nu bydde ic and halsige on Godes naman, gif hwa þas boc awritan wylle, þæt he hi geornlice gerihte be ðære bysene, þy læs ðe we ðurh gymelease writeras geleahtrode beon. Mycel yfel deð se ðe leas writ, buton he hit gerihte' (Now I bid and beseech in God's name, if anyone would copy this book, that he carefully corrects it by the copy, lest that we through careless writers be blamed. Great evil does the man that writes falsely, unless he corrects it' *CH* 1, *Preface*, ll. 86-89), *Ælfric's Prefaces*, ed. by Jonathan Wilcox, (Durham: Durham Medieval Texts, Department of English Studies, 1994), p. 110.

('simplicium') who require 'plain English' ('simplicem Anglicam').[126] It is notable, however, that Ælfric refers to his audience in the Second Series as being mixed, and implicitly made up primarily of the laity.[127] Gatch expands Godden's point, suggesting that, by the time of the construction of Cambridge University Library, MS Gg.3.28 (dated by Ker to s. x/xi), Ælfric must have had at least two uses in mind: first as a manual of devotional readings for his sponsor Æthelweard and others (similar to Carolingian homiliaries, though with some augmentation); and secondly, and indeed primarily, for reading *ad populum*.[128] Indeed, the title of Wulfstan's later work *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, even if it is only reflecting ambition, implies that, by 1014, Wulfstan was able to write for a wider audience. These explicit indicators of the function of the texts authored by Ælfric and Wulfstan may or may not pertain to the earlier Blickling and Vercelli collections, and indeed to the anonymous homilies which circulate in manuscripts from the period. If Wulfstan and Ælfric are innovating in this respect however, the great proliferation of copies of these texts implies a function that is at least in part meant for a wide audience.

The situation before Ælfric is more opaque. The Blickling and Vercelli homiliaries predate Ælfric by approximately a generation and there are also many anonymous homilies that survive from copies made throughout the period s. $x^2$-s. xiii[in]. The early collections (Blickling and Vercelli) show a theological eclecticism,

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[126] *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS SS 5 (London: Oxford University Press for the EETS, 1979), summarized in Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, pp. 52, 16. Ælfric states in his preface: 'Licet temere vel presumptuose, tamen transtulimus hunc codicem ex libris Latinorum, scilicet Sancte Scripture, in nostrum consueltam sermocinationem, ob ędificationem simplicium, qui hanc norunt tantummodo locutionem, sive simplicem Anglicam, quo facilius possit ad cor pervenire legentium *vel audinteium* ad utilitatem animarum suarum, quia alia lingua nesciunt erudiri quam in qua nati sunt.' ('Even if rashly or presumptuously, we have, nevertheless, translated this book from Latin works, namely from Holy Scripture, into the language to which we are accustomed for the edification of the simple who know only this language, either through reading or hearing it read; and for that reason we could not use obscure words, just plain English, by which it may more easily reach to the heart of the readers or listeners to the benefit of their souls, because they are unable to be instructed in a language other than the one to which they were born.') *Prefaces*, pp. 107, 127. See also *CH: First Series* and *Ælfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies: British Museum Royal 7 C.XII, fols. 4-218*, ed. by Norman Eliason and Peter Clemoes, (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde & Bagger, 1966) on the implied audiences of both the First Series in general and the most complete manuscript copy respectively.

[127] See *CH: Second Series*, *Dominica I in Mense Septembri. Quando Legitur Iob* (*CH* 2.30, ll. 229-31). See below Chapter 4, especially Section 4.2.3.

[128] Ker, *Catalogue*, art. 15 pp. 13-21. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 53.

where the editorial framework gives the appearance of creating narrative continuity rather than theological exactness, and it is this aspect of their compilation that, if they are representative of a broader tradition of the homiliary, may have allowed scope for local practices to develop.[129] In contrast to the 'profoundly traditional' theology of the Vercelli and Blickling collections, Ælfric intervenes in his texts to clarify his theological message.[130]

Dendle goes further than Gatch and suggests that Blickling and Vercelli could have been considered 'theologically suspect'.[131] The lack of restraint exhibited by the compilers of these manuscripts, which comprise texts composed by multiple authors over a long time period 'permit[s] occasional insights into the popular Christianity of the period.'[132] The Blickling and Vercelli collections were not compiled with Ælfric's strictly orthodox approach in mind, despite having been compiled no later than the generation preceding Ælfric.[133] This is not to say that the compilers were actively heterodox, but it seems apparent from the homiliaries' texts' constituent sources and their theology that their compilers drew on a weaker set of doctrinal resources than those available to Ælfric (whether those resources be the physical library to which they had access, or the level and sophistication of learning they personally possessed in order to put that library to use). The goals of the compilers of these homiliaries are more difficult to discern than are Ælfric's, as they are managing pre-existing material into a whole with a purpose specific to the compiler himself, the rationale for which does not survive,

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[129] In Vercelli, Scragg notes that though the compiler was probably working from Canterbury during Dunstan's pontificate, the authors of the works created them across different times and in different contexts. At one extreme in homily I the author does not assume understanding of the crown, and at the other, homilies XIX, XX, and XXI, show 'some of the vocabulary favoured by Æthelwold and his colleagues'. *The Vercelli Homilies*, ed. by Donald Scragg, EETS OS 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press for EETS, 1992). As a resource compiled from an extensive library it is likely that some fossils of localism remain in the texts. The Rogation homilies are one possible instance of this. The case of Blickling is more problematical and much work remains to be done on the history of the individual texts that make up the whole. The sources of the individual homilies show a similar spread of authors, including Caesarius, Bede, Alfred and Gregory, as well as a considerable number of anonymous saints' lives.

[130] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 7. See below, Chapter 3, especially Section 3.4.2, and also Section 5.3.1.

[131] Peter Dendle, 'The Role of the Devil in Old English Narrative Literature', (doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, 1998), p. 91.

[132] Ibid., p. 91.

[133] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 8.

except through the evidence of the collections themselves. The individual homilies are also less densely referenced, making the preacher's social standing the qualitative strength or authority of the sermon, rather than the message itself; are more disparate in the sources they choose to translate; and show less concern with a broad Christian education, preferring an eschatological focus in the main.[134]

The early compilers were less well equipped to achieve an orthodox message, either in terms of the libraries to which they had access, or intellectually, as the pre- and early-reform milieu in which they operated had no requirement for the kind of orthodoxy Ælfric sought to cultivate. The Vercelli homilies show, in linguistic features, that they are the reflection of a wide-reaching Church culture that drew its sources from distinctly local environments. Scragg concludes his linguistic analysis of the Vercelli homilies with the following observation: 'the language of A [The Vercelli Book] is a valuable witness to the variety of linguistic forms that a late-tenth-century scribe was faced with, and to his tolerance to them.'[135] The implications of Scragg's conclusions are that despite 'draw[ing] his materials from a south-eastern library' the manuscript sources, the examplars, of the contents of the Vercelli Book were eclectic in their origins. At this point it is worth noting that understanding textual production in the periphery may contribute to the understanding of worship and learning on a local level, and to some extent to their contribution to local practices. The production act that the Vercelli Book represents is interesting in this context, as the nature of anthologizing suggests continuous functionality sufficient that an individual text in

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[134] On Vercelli and Blickling see Paul Szarmach, 'The *Vercelli Homilies*: Style and Structure', in *The Old English Homily and its Backgrounds,* ed. by Paul E. Szarmach and Bernard F. Huppé (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), pp. 241-67; Samantha Zacher, 'Rereading the Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Homilies', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice and Appropriation,* ed. by Aaron J. Kleist (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 173-208, on Vercelli see Marcia A. Dalbey, 'Themes and Techniques in the Blickling Lenten Homilies', in *The Old English Homiliy and its Backgrounds,* ed. by Paul E. Szarmach and Bernard Huppé (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), pp. 221-40; Robin Ann Aronstam, 'The Blickling Homilies: a Reflection of Popular Anglo-Saxon Belief', in *Law, Church and Society: Essays in Honor of Stephan Kuttner,* ed. by Kenneth Pennington and Robert Somerville (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), pp. 271-80. On the eschatology of both collections, Milton McC. Gatch, 'Eschatology in the Anonymous Old English Homilies', *Traditio,* 21 (1965), pp. 117-65. Gatch here suggests that the Blickling Homilies may have been a compilation constructed with an intention to focus specifically on eschatology, whereas the Vercelli homilies reflect a broader selection of materials.

[135] *The Vercelli Homilies*, p. lxxi.

isolation would not provide for the needs of the community that used it. It suggests that the texts were being used frequently enough that greater diversity of material was needed to satisfy occasion or taste.

Gatch suggests '[it is] reasonably, if not absolutely clear that Ælfric had in mind the vernacular homiliaries when he remarked that he undertook to prepare the First Series of the *Catholic Homilies* 'forþan þe ic geseah and gehyrde mycel gedwyld on manegum Engliscum bocum, þe ungelærede men þurh heora bilewitnysse to micclum wisdome tealdon'' (because I saw and heard much heresy in many English books, that unlearned men through their innocence recount as great wisdom).[136] To oppose this 'gedwyld', Ælfric clearly had both the disposition and the means to make his collections uniform in doctrine. The corpus of works available to Ælfric have elicited a great deal of study and though he is comparatively scrupulous in citing his sources where able, there is much still to be understood about the shape and content of the library which Ælfric used in the composition of his works.[137]

Beyond the internal evidence, however, Ælfric's canon itself represents a reaction against the localism described by Gatch.[138] Instead, we see that a principle of uniformity lay behind Ælfric's large-scale project. Though the nuances of this principle have been heavily debated, the texts themselves imply certain types of usage: private devotional reading certainly, but also reading to an audience extended passages of exegesis that are performable, for which evidence can be found in Ælfric's Latin *Preface* to the First Series where Ælfric suggests that his collection has been compiled

> [...] ob ędificationem simplicium, qui hanc norunt tantummodo locutionem, sive simplicem Anglicam, quo facilius possit ad cor pervenire legentium vel auditeium ad utilitatem animarum suarum.

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[136] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 8, my translation. Gatch is quoting *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church: The First Part, Containing the Sermones Catholici or Homilies of Aelfric*, ed. by B. Thorpe, (London: Richard and John E. Taylor, 1844-46), pp. 19-22.

[137] See below, at n. 207.

[138] See above, at n. 23.

[...] for the edification of the simple who know only this language, either
through reading or hearing it read; and for that reason we could not use
obscure words, just plain English, by which it may more easily reach to the
heart of the readers or listeners to the benefit of their souls.[139]

Ælfric emphasises that these texts are for listeners as well as readers, and
explicitly an audience to be taught in the vernacular. He is concerned to extend his
reach as an author for the purpose of clarity and to spread the message.

The absence of surviving manuscript witnesses of texts for use in small-
scale, specifically lay, preaching contexts must be considered along with the
indication from Ælfric's letters to Wulfsige and to Wulfstan that state that priests
should own certain texts.[140] Considering the slightly earlier Carolingian eighth and
ninth centuries, DeLeeuw points to seventeen parish inventories which include
books owned by either the parish itself or its priest, and in ten of these lists,
homiliaries are a feature.[141] DeLeeuw's discussion of the situation in Frankia
establishes that the general level of affluence in western Europe admitted the
possibility of text ownership even at fairly low levels of society, but can be used
here only as a proxy for the conditions in England. It is striking too that Ælfric's
letters deride the *literacy* of the priests rather than their access to texts, possibly
indicating that problems of manuscript supply were not the limiting factor in their
ability to perform their duties.[142]

Corroborating evidence for the saturation of Anglo-Saxon England occurs in
the book-lists of the period.[143] Two are of specific interest here: firstly, the booklist

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[139] *Prefaces*, pp. 107, 127.
[140] Considered above, pp. 49-51.
[141] Patricia A. DeLeeuw, 'The Changing Face of the Village Parish, I: The Parish in the Early
Middle Ages', in *Pathways to Medieval Peasants,* ed. by J. A. Raftis (Wettera, Belgium: Universa,
1981), pp. 311-22, p. 317. The homiliaries DeLeeuw discusses are not written in the vernacular, so
there is a question as to whether these were in any sense performance texts or rather were texts of
private devotion for the clergy. Even in the latter case, their existence implies an interest from that
clergy and they represent information that would have been known by those clergy and would no
doubt be employed in conversations with, and possibly teaching for, the laity.
[142] It could be that the priests were illiterate because they did not have access to text, but
Ælfric's letters do not mention that is a concern. It is a more satisfactory use of the evidence to
adhere to the issues that contemporaries discuss, rather than to imagine problems for them.
[143] Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library*,  (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006),
especially Appendix A, pp. 133-47.

from the foundation of Peterborough Abbey in 970 which contains twenty volumes, mostly works of the Church Fathers; and secondly the booklist of Æthelstan, whom Lapidge identifies as an otherwise unknown grammarian or schoolmaster, which contains some fifteen entries. The former is a list of works donated by Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester to Peterborough Abbey and from its content is designed to supplement an already impressive collection. The works Æthelwold donates are, in the main, works of (esoteric) scholarly interest: the texts of the Church Fathers, a Greek-Latin glossary, some *vitae*, and exegetical commentaries. There is a notable absence of Gospels or functional preaching material, and indeed of any teaching material for use in the school, implying this donation was a supplement to an already substantial collection. The booklist of Æthelstan the grammarian appears in London, British Library, MS Cotton Domitian i, which is dated to s. $x^2$. Even if it only represents the collection of an Anglo-Saxon bibliophile, as is likely, in its fifteen items this booklist shows the array of texts that could be obtained by someone outside of the set of people of whom we have a better record. These may represent special cases, particularly the latter, but they do at least establish that it is plausible that the founding of an institution saw it collect a set of texts, and that text collections of otherwise unknown individuals, like Æthelstan the grammarian, could be of the size Ælfric expected.

The point of origin and early provenance of the surviving witnesses imply large institutional contexts. Generally speaking, though surviving manuscripts have been located at the major institutions that we know to have had a large output, this is partially due to the way in which such localisations are derived. Gameson suggests that

> it is worth remembering that the process of attributing early medieval manuscripts to particular scriptoria, which relies on grouping books of similar appearance around those of known or presumed origin [...] inevitably favours homogeneity over heterogeneity. Many of the books we

can localise will, almost by definition, form groups that are fairly regular in appearance.[144]

Gameson notes that though we should be careful when working from this impression of homogeneity, 'it makes best sense on the whole to imagine a smaller number of major centres supplying the needs of most other places than to envisage every minster, manor or parish church, not to mention noble household, attempting to make its own manuscripts.'[145] Gameson does not question the need for text in the less established contexts, only that they were unlikely to be self-sufficient in this regard. What we have evidence of, then, is the spine of an extensive model of distribution only partially preserved, and indicating very little of the further dissemination of text beyond the centres in which they were produced. Beyond the larger scriptoria, evidence for both use, and more especially production, is difficult to adduce, though we doubtless have some examples of such activity that have not or cannot be identified.

For Anglo-Saxon England, three studies in particular have investigated the nature of the texts beyond these scriptoria, the highly ephemeral preaching texts, and these studies have begun the work of disentangling the relationship between practice as defined (in idyllic form) by those in large institutions, and practice as it existed in the field(s).[146] Thompson's investigation finds that the mid-eleventh-century manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 482 simultaneously reflects the 'often tense relationship between priest and parishioner' and 'attempts to resolve it by enabling priests to perform the sacraments with the utmost clarity.'[147] In a case study using similar methods, Gittos finds that the Red Book of

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[144] Gameson, 'Anglo-Saxon Scribes and Scriptoria', p. 116.

[145] Ibid., p. 103.

[146] Helen Gittos, 'Is there any Evidence for the Liturgy of Parish Churches in Late Anglo-Saxon England? The Red book of Darley and the Status of Old English', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England,* ed. by Francesca Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 63-82; Victoria Thompson, 'The Pastoral Contract in Late Anglo-Saxon England: Priest and Parishioner in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Miscellaneous 482', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England,* ed. by Francesca Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 106-20; Wilcox, 'Junius 85 and 86 in the Field'.

[147] Thompson, 'Pastoral Contract', p. 119.

Darley (dated by Gittos to c. 1061) 'seems to contain almost everything that the putative parish priest required.'[148] She continues:

> With this in one's satchel one would be able to perform all of the occasional offices required by a priest, except for penance and confession. This is what led Christopher Hohler to characterize it as 'the book a good, pastorally minded, monk priest is going to take with him round the villages'.[149]

Both Gittos' and Thompson's hypotheses of the use of text in the field highlight the occasional offices such as baptism, the blessing of marriages, and burial, as being the key function of ecclesiastical professionals (either local or minster-based priests, or monks from a nearby community) in pastoral care for which text would be required.

There is a substantial gap between the minimal view of the use of homilies described by Gatch and the expanding scale and scope of parochial worship alluded to between the lines of Ælfric, Wulfstan and others, and indeed by the archaeological record. Wilcox's study turns to the preaching function explicitly, and considers the dissemination of homilies.[150] Building on the extensive work on Ælfric's corpus carried out by Clemoes, Wilcox makes the case for a model of distribution whose terminus was booklets that circulated with priests.[151] Wilcox identifies a quire in Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Junius 85 and 86 which, he argues, constitutes a booklet that had independent circulation prior to being interpolated into the manuscript and suggests that this example is symptomatic of the nature of the adoption of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* by smaller institutions on a

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[148] Gittos, 'Liturgy of Parish Churches', p. 69. The Red Book of Darley refers to Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 422, and Gittos works especially from the second half of this volume.

[149] Ibid., p. 69. Gittos cites Christopher Hohler, 'The Red Book of Darley', in *Nordiskt Kollokvium II i Latinsk Litugiforskning,* (Stockholm, 1972), p. 44.

[150] Wilcox, 'Junius 85 and 86 in the Field'. Wilcox's method builds on that of P. R. Robinson, 'Self-Contained Units in Composite Manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Period', *ASE,* 7 (1978), pp. 231-38. Robinson's conclusion gives a tentative suggestion as to how self-contained units may have been used in practice: 'A monk and mass-priest who was a member of a monastery such as Worcester, from which both Hatton 115 and CCCC 198 survive, and who had the cure of a parish outside the monastery, could have borrowed a relevant homily to preach to his parishioners', p. 238. On dissemination of homiletic material across larger institutions see Wilcox, 'Dissemination of Wulfstan's Homilies'.

[151] *CH: First Series*; Wilcox, 'Junius 85 and 86 in the Field'.

grand scale. Wilcox argues that large institutions disseminated the texts during a period of great ecclesiastical administrative development and suggests that this model accounts for the peculiarly high survival rate of Ælfric's homiletic materials:

> It is likely that Ælfric's homilies were such a phenomenal success because they filled a need for an extended programme of pastoral care at the moment that there was an explosion in pastoral models, as local churches with local priests began to proliferate across England even as an older pattern of minster churches remained in place, and at the same time as reformed monasteries heavily stressed a pastoral over an eremitical mission.[152]

Wilcox's conclusions are convincing but in coming to them he recognizes the limitations of the evidence. His point is made on the basis of one surviving manuscript quire which fits into a broader canon of two further booklets containing anonymous homilies, identified by Robinson.[153] It is difficult, in this context, to quantify the relative popularity of Ælfric's homilies from the surviving evidence beyond stating that, in a very general sense, the distribution of the homilies implies ubiquity. Furthermore, Wilcox is obliged to provide a caveat prior to his analysis stating that his conclusions are made 'in broad terms, allowing for significant regional variation'.[154]

The texts themselves, then, appear to be an eclectic collection up until the time of Ælfric, at which point copies of his works dominate the collection of manuscripts that survive. In Vercelli and Blickling we have evidence that prior to Ælfric there was less concern with, or at least a less uniform approach to, the contents of the message, but still evidence that the fact of a message in the vernacular intended for an audience existed. Furthermore, Gatch's suggestion that the Blickling homiliary may have been compiled with an eschatological theme in

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[152] Wilcox, 'Junius 85 and 86 in the Field', p. 347.
[153] Robinson, 'Self-Contained Units in Composite Manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Period'. Robinson identifies Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 115, fols 140-47 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. F. 4. 32 fols 10-18 as independent booklets. The former contains a 'vernacular homily describing hell' and the latter a 'vernacular homily on the Invention of the Cross' p. 231.
[154] Wilcox, 'Junius 85 and 86 in the Field', p. 349.

mind indicates one of two possible hypotheses: either that there was such a high availability and range of vernacular homilies that one could compose a thematic selection from its contents, or that interest in the eschatological, and therefore Antichrist, was so extensive that homilies concerning these themes were particularly readily available. The contexts of the texts, the milieu in which they were constructed, the communities that needed them, and the environments in which they were performed, all influence our understanding of how learning regarding the devil filtered down from the theological study taking place in the chapter houses and the monasteries to the laity. It is at this last point of transmission, the performance of vernacular texts *ad populum* that study will be most instructive in understanding what specifically the lay population was being taught about the devil, and ultimately how that population's views were formed.

2.3  Texts and performance

The performance contexts of the vernacular preaching texts have been heavily debated. Most evidence exists for Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, and it is from the manuscript witnesses of these texts that most of what we understand about vernacular preaching in the tenth and eleventh centuries has been gleaned. Gatch expresses a minimalist view: 'in addition to the homiletic lections of Night Office and perhaps also because the nocturnal lections had been abbreviated, a new place was found for additional homiletic exercises.'[155] Turning to the internal evidence from the *Catholic Homilies*, Gatch admits that 'the Prefaces, like the incipit, stress the fact that the pieces which make up the two series are to be recited publicly in church', and later refers to 'their primary use as books for public reading'.[156] Gatch heavily qualifies these statements, as it is clear that Ælfric had other, additional, uses in mind at some point between his homilies' inception and their later copying. However, these additional arenas in which these offices were being performed are unlikely to have been accessible to the laity. Looking beyond internal evidence from Ælfric's texts, nothing is preserved in the *Regularis Concordia* about preaching at mass, where the laity would usually be assumed to receive exegesis, thus, establishing lay access to performance contexts is no simple matter.

Considering the manuscript context and the Regular customs, Clayton, in a discussion of the function of the homiliary in a preaching context, notes:

At the beginning of his career [Ælfric] thought that forty homilies a year was sufficient [for the laity] [...] The Blickling Collection for preaching to the

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[155] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 41.

[156] Ibid., p. 48. Further see Gatch, 'Eschatology in the Anonymous Old English Homilies', p. 135. Here Gatch suggests that 'the allusions of the *Blickling Book* to non-canonical sources are generally self-contained and seem to rely less on the prior knowledge of the audience than, say, the allusions to Germanic pre-history in *Beowulf*. Apocryphal and visionary materials are used primarily for illustration, and the allusions are self-explanatory.' Gatch's comments imply that an audience need not have any privileged education in order for the homiliary to be suitable for them, which in turn implies there was no impediment of required knowledge/privileged position internal to the collection for the laity.

laity is even smaller and the Rule of Chrodegang enjoins that the laity should be preached to every two weeks.[157]

Tinti suggests that pilgrimages and liturgical celebrations at saint's shrines provide one possible context for vernacular preaching.[158] Wilcox corroborates this assertion with internal evidence from the homilies, and adds the Sunday mass as a context in which the laity could receive the vernacular homilies:

> As expositions of gospel pericopes, [the homilies] clearly appear to have a liturgical purpose: they provide an explanation and expansion in English of the Latin gospel reading from the mass. As such they could be read out by a priest to a congregation in the course of a church service on a Sunday or a major saint's day that was celebrated in church. [...] Audience address frequently alludes to a lay audience of both men and women, as would be expected at the Sunday services. Such a wide-ranging lay audience may have been inattentive at times to the preacher's message and Ælfric sometimes hints as much.[159]

Similarly, from Blickling Homily IV we have corroborative evidence of a wide-reaching audience that takes as its members all those who are within earshot of the performance of church rituals:

> Swa Sanctus Paulus cwæþ þætte God hete ealle þa aswæman æt heofona rices dura, þa þe heora cyrican forlæteþ, ond forhycggaþ þa Godes dreamas to heherenne. Forþon ne þearf þæs nanne man tweogean, þæt seo forlætene cyrice ne hycgge ymb þaþe on hire neawiste lifgeaþ.

> So St Paul has said that God commanded all those that forsake their church, despise to hear God's songs to be grieved before heaven's kingdom's doors.

[157] Mary Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Old English Prose: Basic Readings,* ed. by Paul E. Szarmach (New York and London: Garland, 1987), pp. 151-98, p. 187.
[158] Francesca Tinti, 'Introduction', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England,* ed. by Francesca Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 1-17, p. 10.
[159] Wilcox, 'Ælfric in Dorset', pp. 53-54.

> Because of this, no man need have doubt: that the forsaken church will not
>
> care for those that live near it.[160]

This last passage explicitly states that those for whom the Church is responsible have a responsibility to attend church to hear the songs of the Lord, but by the function of the message it states, it implies that those who are hearing it are those that should be doing the attending. Simply put, this passage is aimed at the lay audience regardless of their level of education or gender, and requires their attendance at church for the explicit reason that they must hear the preaching of God. This point also hints tantalizingly at the author relying on the reflective self-enforcement mechanisms of community, using the attendees to disperse a message to those not in attendance: if the entire community is present then the message is itself redundant, and is similarly redundant if there is no member of the community present who can interact with those expected to attend. Only in the case of partial attendance of a group that communicates within itself does this message perform any function.

Rosser considers urban centres leading up to the millennium, and therefore starts from the minster model which counts amongst its proponents Blair and Thacker.[161] Rosser concludes:

> Nearly all priests and clerks in minor orders living in England between 700
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> and 1000 were based in central places: actual or nascent towns. They
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> resided in those communities generally called minsters; but whether they
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> followed some elements of a daily rule or were simply the more common
>
> clerical team ministries, their status and organization did not segregate

[160] *The Blickling Homilies: Edition and Translation*, ed. by Richard J. Kelly, (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 28, my translation.

[161] Gervase Rosser, 'The Cure of Souls in English Towns Before 1000', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish,* ed. by John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp. 267-84; Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England'; Blair, 'The Birth and Growth of Local Churches, c.850-1100'; Blair, 'From *Hyrness* to Parish: The Formation of Parochial Identities c.850-1100'. See above, Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 for analysis of Thacker and Blair.

them definitively from the laity of the immediate environs and surrounding hinterland.[162]

Rosser's suggestion implies diversity of ability, knowledge and application that accords with the diverse implications of Ælfric's letters, described by Hill at the start of this analysis.[163] Rosser points to the opportunity offered to priests by the increasing urbanisation of later Anglo-Saxon England, suggesting that (proto-) towns functioned 'on the one hand, as bases from which pastoral tours of the rural hinterland could be launched, and on the other, as foci to which the laity were periodically drawn for a variety of purposes, of which spiritual welfare became one.'[164] This is not a necessary implication of the nature of priests as integrated members of society separate from their spiritual function, but rather is an assumption based on the incidence of the minsters that existed in urban centres. Rosser supports his argument with two anecdotes, from the *Vita S. Ecgwini* and from the *Gesta pontificum* of William of Malmesbury.[165] Rosser uses the quite possibly exceptional St Ecgwine who preached in the town but was drowned out by the blacksmiths' hammers and Aldhelm who went to preach on the bridge as the country-folk came into town for market, to demonstrate opportunism in ecclesiastics' creation of preaching contexts, and generalises these cases positing 'a general tendency of the ecclesiastical mission to exploit opportunities generated by economic activity.'[166] Plausible though the assumption is, it is nevertheless potentially taking liberties with the extent to which the examples he cites can be generalised to the broader situation. Though opportunities such as these must have presented themselves they seem unsatisfactory as a basis on which to create a pastoral mission to the laity.

Despite all of the evidence for a lay presence at worship, and despite the clear statement made by Ælfric in his letters to Wulfsige and Wulfstan that the clergy are expected to preach and to teach, homiliaries are not among the books

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[162] Rosser, 'The Cure of Souls in English Towns Before 1000', p. 284
[163] See above, at n. 108.
[164] Rosser, 'The Cure of Souls in English Towns Before 1000', p. 268.
[165] Ibid., pp. 268-69, nn. 5, 6.
[166] Ibid., p. 269.

that either Ælfric or Wulfstan expect priests to own.[167] Indeed, the preaching function as far as Wulfstan is concerned appears to be limited to catechesis rather than homiletics.[168] From the *Preface* to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* it is clear that though the texts could be read in church Ælfric had envisioned them to be suitable for private devotional reading too.[169] Gatch observes that 'If one overlooks the incipit, the English Preface to the First Series [of *Catholic Homilies*] contains no clear reference to public reading'.[170] In the *Preface*, Ælfric is redefining his texts as texts for devotional reading, or is adding this function to their original use: oral delivery at Cerne.

The *Preface* only appears in one early (s. x/xi) manuscript, Cambridge University Library, MS Gg.3.28, which is also the only manuscript that contains all of the homilies in both the First and Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*.[171] London, British Library MS Royal C.xii, which is the witness of the First Series that is most close to the author, and which contains Ælfric's own interventions and corrections in the text, does not contain the *Preface* with its exhortation to the scribe: 'Nu bydde ic & halsige on godes naman gif hwa þas boc awritan wylle þæt he hi geornlice gerihte be ðære bysene' (Now I pray and ask in God's name if anyone wishes to copy this book that he earnestly correct it by the exemplar).[172] This implies that Ælfric's concern for the stability of his text only achieved expression towards the end of the project, and after its initial dissemination. More importantly for the current analysis, it implies that regardless of Ælfric's effort to redefine use for the text, their original use, or their implied use, was more important to later copyists of the texts, and that Ælfric was conscious of, and indeed anxious about, this fact. The relatively poor survival rate of the *Preface*

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[167] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 42, see nn. 138, 140 above.

[168] Ibid., p. 43.

[169] *Prefaces*, pp. 107, 127, quoted above, at n. 135.

[170] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 48.

[171] There are 98 items in the two series of *Catholic Homilies* as found in Cambridge University Library, MS Gg.3.28 (Ker, *Catalogue*, art. 15, pp. 13-21). This manuscript is dated by Ker to s. x/xi. The next most frequent proportion of the whole of the two-volume work is held jointly by Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 343 (ibid., art. 220, pp. 368-75, dated to s. xii²) and London, British Library MS Cotton Vitellius C.v (ibid., art. 220, pp. 285-91, dated to s. x/xi, xiⁱ) which both contain 48 of the items, scattered between both series. For a more detailed analysis of Ælfric's changing attitudes to the material that he placed in the *Preface* see below, Section 5.3.1.

[172] Ibid., art. 157, pp. 324-29. *CH: First Series*, p. 177, ll. 128-30.

seems ironic given its contents, but may also imply any number of opposing conclusions, the limits of which can be defined as follows: that it was an unwelcome reminder of an authorial intention which was being ignored and, therefore, not preserved; or that it was so obvious that it did not need preserving. The utility of the homilies separate from the *Preface*, and indeed from each other, is demonstrated by their extensive survival in smaller groups.

There may be some variance between how the homilies were conceived to be used and their actual uses in practice. In her *Introduction* Tinti notes:

> The *Regularis Concordia* assumes a regular presence of lay people at mass, and the sizes of the churches built or rebuilt as a result of the reform confirm that they were intended for large congregations and not just the use of monastic communities.[173]

Though the *Regularis Concordia* does not describe a lay presence at any ritual, Tinti states that their attendance is implicit. Citing examples from Hemming's *Cartulary* and William of Malmsbury, she continues:

> [This set of examples] seems to confirm the fact that in late Anglo-Saxon England monastic houses, especially those attached to cathedrals and located in towns, were still very much involved with the laity.[174]

Though built on inference, the conclusion seems likely. Evidence from the manuscript record indicates an unusually high survival rate for these texts that implies either very selective survival or ubiquity.

Clayton also alludes to a possible reason that our understanding of at least Ælfric's purpose is clouded. Clayton argues that Ælfric's homilies had been written by the author while he took two roles, in the guise of both '"munuc and mæssepreost" in a monastic church that cared also for the laity'.[175] This dual identity, of both author and preacher, and disparate audience, Clayton suggests, 'allowed Ælfric to write for a mixed audience and, while still aiming primarily at

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[173] Tinti, 'Introduction', p. 7.
[174] Ibid., p. 8.
[175] Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', p. 189.

instructing lay people, to include passages and sometimes whole texts that relate more to the religious elements in the congregation.'[176] Even if Ælfric's circumstances were unique, his texts, by evidence of their wide circulation, were useful in many circumstances across the country.

Tackling the issue from the angle of manuscript studies, Swan focuses on the performative aspect of the sermons as they appear in their manuscript witnesses to attempt to reconstruct the event these sermons imply.[177] Swan outlines two senses of performance: firstly a staged, public, performed delivery of the text; and secondly a performative act as an agent to create the identities of both performer and audience.[178] Such performance is certainly envisioned by Ælfric in his *Letter for Wulfsige* where he states: 'Se mæssepreost sceal secgan Sunnandagum and mæssedagum þæs godspelles angyt on englisc þam folce' (On Sundays and mass-days, the mass-priest shall tell and explain the meaning of the gospel in English to the people).[179]

In terms of the manner in which preachers affected their audiences, Swan points to the interdependency of preacher and audience: the preacher is more powerful since he 'has the right to the stage, so to speak, has control of the text and has the authority [...] to expound sacred text and to teach and exhort the audience', yet the preacher's voice is without meaning in the absence of an audience.[180] The agency is entirely the priest's, though he is given that agency by those hearing him. Swan explores implicit stage direction in the Lenten homilies from the Blickling collection, Ælfric's First Series of *Catholic Homilies*, and the late manuscript (s. xii[ex]) Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343. The differences between the early and late manuscript witnesses are striking. Though all three case studies imply a 'slippery' relationship between preacher and audience that is constantly being

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[176] Ibid., p. 189.
[177] Mary Swan, 'Constructing Preacher and Audience in Old English Homilies', in *Constructing the Medieval Sermon,* ed. by Roger Andersson (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), pp. 177-88.
[178] Ibid., p. 178.
[179] *Ælfric's Pastoral Letter for Bishop Wulfsige*, c. 61, Dorothy Whitelock, 'Two Notes on Ælfric and Wulfstan', in *History, Law and Literature in 10th-11th Century England. Essays by Dorothy Whitelock. (Collected Studies, 128),* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1981), pp. 122-26, pp. 191-226, at p. 208.
[180] Swan, 'Preacher and Audience', p. 179.

manipulated into subtly different positions, Ælfric, it seems, is peculiarly aware of the performance context in which he expects the homilies to be consumed. Swan implicitly raises the question of to whom the first person pronoun 'ic' refers in the direct address of Ælfric's homilies.[181] Ælfric's usual pronoun of choice is the collective 'we', so when he shifts into a first person register we must ask whether this is Ælfric addressing the audience *in absentia* (and indeed whether such an address would have held any relevance for the addressee), or whether Ælfric is bestowing his endorsement on what are purportedly the thoughts of the preacher reading the text. The position of Ælfric as author/speaker in relation to his homilies in their performance context requires more study, but Swan's conclusions are striking and compelling: 'all three [of Swan's case studies] emphasize the essential community of worship which they need in order to function as part of the liturgy and which they are also striving to create.'[182] Whatever the audience that is listening to the vernacular homilies, it is in the plural and its individuals are being encouraged to consider their co-members as an integral part of their experience of worship.

Corona's discussion of Ælfric's alliterative prose style could be used as corroborative evidence for this more performative aspect of his work.[183] Corona points to Ælfric's experimentation with the alliterative prose style, suggesting it shows an ''intermarriage' between Old English prose and poetry [which] is consummated at three levels, the rhythmical, the verbal and the rhetorical.' She continues:

> It is beyond doubt that Ælfric's primary inspiration came from the chiselled
> work of the *sceopas*, rather than from the Latin cursus or the intermittently
> alliterative patterns of the Latin Hagiographies. As in Old English poetry, in
> Ælfric's later works intralinear and interlinear alliteration create a tight

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[181] Ibid., p. 178.

[182] Ibid., p. 188. See Mary Swan, 'Identiy and Ideology in Ælfric's Prefaces', in *A Companion to Ælfric,* ed. by Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 247-69.

[183] Gabriella Corona, 'Ælfric's (Un)Changing Style: Continuity of Patterns from the Catholic Homilies to the Lives of Saints', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology,* 107 (2008), pp. 169-89.

interlace which often coincides with units of meaning, or forms the texture
of self-contained passages.[184]

It is striking that Ælfric is choosing to imitate an oral form of delivery recognising both the limitations and advantages of aural consumption. Although the metre is obscured in alliterative prose by its loose application of the norms of Old English verse, its effect is apparent to us as readers. The modern distinction between poetry and prose, in editions certainly, is indicated by the layout of the text on the page. The evidence from the poetic manuscripts that survive show that no such distinction pertains for poetry in Old English, rather the effect of metre is aural. Whether one uses the ear or the mind's ear to receive it (e.g. in private devotional reading), the implicitly performative nature of the text cannot be ignored. The alliterative prose style is a late development in the composition of the homiletic texts. Given that these texts were not composed for the manuscripts in which they appear, but rather that the manuscripts were compiled to house copies of the texts, the shift in emphasis to the performative aspect is also probably a late development in the life of the texts. It is possible that Ælfric is reacting to the use of his earlier works as he creates this alliterative prose style.[185] Ælfric comments in his *Preface* to the Second Series of *Catholic Homilies* that it is not his intention to give a verbose account of his sources but a straightforward rendering 'sicuti Omnipotens Dei gratia nobis dicavit' (Just as the omnipotent grace of God dictated to us).[186] Pope's list of those homilies that include Ælfric's rhythmical prose style places them all in the Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*, and most in the middle twenty homilies.[187] This is counterintuitive, in that internal evidence from the Second Series of *Catholic Homilies* suggests that it has been constructed as a manual for preachers in the first instance, rather than a set of sermons for general consumption, as the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* appears to be.[188] The lesson is

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[184] Ibid., p. 170.

[185] In actively engaging with the texts subsequent to their initial dissemination, Ælfric is given an opportunity to revisit and revise the text as Wulfstan does.

[186] *Prefaces*, p. 111.

[187] *Homilies of Ælfric. A Supplementary Collection*, ed. by J. C. Pope, EETS OS 259 and 260 (London: Oxford University Press for EETS, 1967-68), pp. 114-15 and 119.

[188] See Malcolm Godden, 'The Development of Ælfric's Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*', *English Studies,* 54 (1973), pp. 209-16.

to be used for teaching teachers rather than the laity, so that the teacher might assume a higher level of attentiveness in his audience.

Looking at the distribution of these homilies across the manuscript witnesses with traditional approaches offers no great insight. These texts do not tend to be found as a group, nor is there a sense of conformity to them in their appearance. Although these specific homilies are among the more copied of the Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*, there is such a dearth of evidence compared to that relating to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* that is difficult to come to any strong conclusions. Why, then, does this form of emphasising the performative aspect appear to be developed for a set of homilies if that set was less likely to be performed? That these texts lend themselves more to devoted reading and rumination than performance remains a conundrum. To create a synthesis that admits Godden's interpretation of the audience for the Second Series, I would suggest that Ælfric is simply a better writer by this point and has realised and/or accepted the scale and scope of the impact of the project upon which he embarked.[189] This observation, however, provides grounds to question the extent to which Godden's suggestion that the Second Series was intended for consumption by a set of ecclesiastical professionals was realised in its function beyond its immediate context, and suggests we should revise the size of the audience of the Second Series upwards to take this into account.

It is unclear at which precise stage of Ælfric's career his alliterative voice becomes apparent. Clemoes argues from the evidence of twelve of the extant manuscripts that the homilies as we have them have undergone six separate stages of intervention from Ælfric, the first three of revision and the second three of supplementation.[190] Where we do have interventions, though, Clayton has found

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[189] It is also possible to argue this point from the opposite direction: these texts are more likely to be performed *per se*, but in a different context i.e. in the chapter or synod. These text copies are therefore closer to their performance termini than are the copies of the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* that survive, as their termini, as manuals for teaching a congregation of teachers, is more likely to be sited at a large institution than a more intimate context.

[190] *CH: First Series*, p. 64.

evidence of an effort to insert some alliteration in his revision process.[191] It is quite possible that this stylistic trait is simply a later development in Ælfric's writing career and that he altered those copies to which he had access, but that the survival rate of those altered texts (presumably those more heavily used and more easily accessible) has not been as high as those that reflected earlier forms of the texts. Ælfric's tempering of his own style in sympathy with a performative mode indicates that the restrictive narrative of the extent of dissemination of text (which limits the texts to the lections of the night office), either did not exist or had broken down by the time Ælfric came to disseminate his Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*. Most likely, given the behaviour of the distribution of the texts after their initial composition, the texts were considered supremely useful and therefore were copied to a far greater extent, and for a far broader set of circumstances, than Ælfric had originally envisaged. Ælfric was at least comfortable enough with this process to develop his style into a more performative mode, but we should also bear in mind Ælfric's stated anxiety that access to texts without context can put at risk clarity of understanding.

Furthermore, Wilcox indicates that there are multiple possible audiences implied by the texts themselves.[192] In addition to the above, at various points, Wilcox describes how the homilies may have been used for 'a wide-ranging lay audience [that] may have been inattentive at times', '[a] lay audience that [...] may not be relied on to attend all services, although they are likely to turn out on Easter Day', 'both layfolk and clerics', and 'a monastic audience'.[193] Our view of Ælfric's audiences, then, should be at once greater than the most restrictive of his intentions and less than the most optimistic of contemporary expectations.

Ælfric indicates awareness of audience in his writing style as it develops and we can glean some information about that audience from this awareness. The nature of the texts themselves do imply certain usages but more importantly they actually preclude very few. The archaeological evidence cited by Tinti implies that

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[191]Mary Clayton, 'Ælfric's *De Virginitate*, lines 35-54', *Notes and Queries,* n.s. 32 (1985), pp. 8-10.

[192] Wilcox, 'Ælfric in Dorset'.

[193] Ibid., pp. 53, 54.

the audience at mass must have been larger than that of the minimalist view of performance contexts. It is more likely that the total audience of the texts was in fact a relatively wide cross-section of society, even if their consumption of the texts occurred in strictly stratified subgroups.[194] Ælfric's awareness of the reach of his message, of the level of education of his listeners and of the depth of their understanding, has left its mark on the texts, and in his correspondence regarding his project and those of others.

The preceding discussion has assessed the evidence regarding the performance of homiletic texts, which is sparse and often allusive. There are, however several aspects that indicate that a broad audience can be assumed by the eleventh century: the contents of the texts themselves, the opportunities afforded through mixed audiences comprising laity and ecclesiastics, the performativity implied through stage directions, the actions of homily authors in their revisions, and the developing alliterative style of Ælfric in particular. Specific audiences are impossible to describe fully, and Gatch's minimalist view, with which this section began, remains the sole remnant of entirely safe ground upon which critics can rely in discussions of influence of texts upon individuals. The consensus, though, is that homilies were used for preaching to the laity on a regular (though not necessarily frequent) basis. Indeed, in some cases we can go further to say that the behaviour of some homilists implies that they were aware of this specific function of their texts, and were writing in sympathy with the audience that such a function insinuates. It is to the homilies, then, that we must turn first for our best understanding of what the laity were likely to be taught about the devil, and the context in which that teaching took place. It is also within the homiletic corpus that we should consider the possible intentions of authors to control information about the devil and the manner in which it was communicated. To discuss authorial intent we must turn to Ælfric, as it is his canon that is best attested and of him that we know most in the formative stages of the eleventh century.

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[194] E.g. that group described as possible users of the chapel at Raunds by Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 456-57.

## 2.4 Conclusions

In describing the influences on popular understanding of the devil in the late Anglo-Saxon period, several aspects have been highlighted for investigation. To glean an understanding of the relationship between the populace of late Anglo-Saxon England and the devil, a series of other relationships need to be understood: the relationship between the laity and the knowledge that is likely to have come to individuals through transmission of information outside of the sermon context, the relationship between the preacher and the texts that he performed, the relationship between the audience and the texts they heard, the relationship between the author and the texts he produced, and the relationship between the texts that survive and each of the texts I have mentioned. In each case, texts are key.

In order to explore fully and sensitively the representation of the devil that was received most ubiquitously in late Anglo-Saxon England, my investigation will consider the following research questions. Firstly, 'what is the representation of the devil that would have been most widely performed in Anglo-Saxon England?' The answer to this question will inform our understanding of the scope and mechanism of lay religious learning in the eleventh century.

Ultimately my concern is with the way in which authors evoked the devil for the population of Anglo-Saxon England. Therefore, my second and third questions will explore the level of agency that can be attributed to authors in the creation of the representation of the devil discussed in the previous question: 'to what extent were these Anglo-Saxon authors aware of the audience that ultimately received their texts?' and 'how did this affect their deployment of sources and motifs in representing the devil?' Agency of individuals is important as an indicator of the methods by which an Anglo-Saxon mind approached the problems we can discern that they faced. By taking decisions in the presentation of the devil the authors indicate to us their methodology in teaching and their understanding of their own task. This drives beyond authorial intent towards unpicking the task of creating a didactic culture in a practical context.

Finally we must consider the impact that these authors had on the people they targeted. The distribution and incidence of texts is the main piece of evidence available for popular understanding of the devil, as it is through performed texts that active lay education is able to take place. Active education is key here as it will describe influences upon individuals rather than assumed knowledge. I have briefly considered (above) the inherited knowledge that appears to seep through the fabric of society, in order to suggest an outline for the knowledge base that can be assumed prior to active engagement with ecclesiastical teaching. But beyond this background of understanding that the laity in late Anglo-Saxon England can be assumed to have, we must consider how, and how quickly, texts were made available in contexts to which the laity would have had access. My final research question, therefore, is 'what texts and types of text are likely to have been ubiquitously available and used for teaching at a local level in the early-eleventh century in England?' The response to this question will establish a canon of texts that would have been highly influential in lay education in the period and therefore formative in their engagement with the themes they contain.

3.0 Ælfric

Ælfric's canon is the best preserved of the literature we know to have been in use in the eleventh century. As outlined above, in order to investigate how Ælfric evokes the devil for his audience, we must consider the extent to which Ælfric was aware of the audience that ultimately received his text, and secondly how he deploys the devil for that audience. Failing to conduct this study with sensitivity to the context of the task as Ælfric perceives it, and in which it was conceived, would make it impossible to discern the effect of texts on specific audiences of late Anglo-Saxon England. Furthermore, it would relegate the understanding of the devil to be gleaned from Ælfric's work to a curio, of interest only insofar as it indicates the thoughts of one exceptional individual.

We can gain an unusual level of insight into Ælfric's intentions generally, and specifically his intentions with regard to the devil, since of all the Old English prose works we have inherited, only in those authored by Ælfric and Alfred do we find discussions of the writing rationale of the piece or corpus in consideration. Ælfric presents himself explicitly as part of a reform milieu so his context in the reform movement and his conception of his place within that reform movement are crucial to unpicking his own view of his task. Ælfric's response to the situation he perceived comprises the texts that he composed, so it will be within those texts that I will explore the way Ælfric engages with his sources, in terms of both their form and content, and assess the way in which he synthesises a devil for his audience.

In the analysis that follows (both here and in Chapter 4) I will focus on two overlapping groups, two sets of criteria by which I have identified the high-impact texts in eleventh-century understanding of the devil: firstly those texts that contain a high incidence of references to, or descriptions of, the devil; and secondly those texts that survive in most copies from the century in question as this is the simplest basis upon which we can currently consider popularity. The chapter concludes with three case studies, the first and last of which are highly copied, especially in the early period of transmission (i.e. s. xi$^{1/2}$), and the second of which shows, in its earliest incarnation, indicia of Ælfric's re-engagement with the devil,

edited at the very final stages before the first copy of the homilies went to Sigeric for further distribution. It is in these homilies, then, that Ælfric's intentions and concerns with respect to his audience are most readily observable. It is also here that Ælfric's impact on audiences beyond his own community and the impact of his conception of those audiences is most fully evinced. Initially, however, we must explore Ælfric's lens, through which he approaches the material with which he engages and the contexts in which he expected his work to be consumed.

3.1 Ælfric in the context of the reform movement

The evidence indicates that Ælfric was born in the mid-tenth century and was educated at Æthelwold's monastery in Winchester, from where he was sent to Cerne Abbas (Cernel) in Dorset which had been founded by the nobleman Æthelmær.[195] In 1005 Ælfric became abbot of Eynsham, a new monastery founded by (probably the same) Æthelmær.[196] Ælfric died at some point after 1010.[197] In his works, Ælfric makes it clear that he considered himself very much a product of the developing intellectual milieu in which he was raised and trained: Gatch points to the fact that Ælfric describes himself in the first instance as *alumnus Æðelwoldi* or *Wintoniensis alumnus*, and both epithets act as implicit endorsements of his work.[198]

The intellectual watershed between the anonymous Blickling and Vercelli collections and Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* is the Benedictine reform movement. The reform movement was fundamentally based on the popularization of the text of the *Regula S. Benedicti* translated by Æthelwold (d. 984), and was able to flourish in the context of the return to normal life in the mid-tenth century after the disruptive Danish raids of the early/mid-tenth century and the reconquest of Northumbria (944) by Edmund I (reigned 922-46). The key figures of the reform movement emerge circa 940 with the appointment of Dunstan (d. 988) as Abbot of Glastonbury, and later Archbishop of Canterbury (960-78), as well as the successive reformers Oswald (d. 992), Bishop of Worcester (961-92) and Archbishop of York (972-92), and Æthelwold, Abbot of Abingdon and later Bishop of Winchester (963-84), who between them 'confirmed the movement's longevity through their long lives and seniority'.[199]

The reform movement in England was in the ascendant while Ælfric was being educated at Winchester. The movement took as its mandate the *Regularis*

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[195] 'Æthelmær 15', PASE. See also Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 13.
[196] 'Æthelmær 22', PASE.
[197] 'Ælfric 94', ibid., Malcolm Godden, 'Ælfric of Eynsham (c.950–c.1010)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/187, accessed 17 July 2012].
[198] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 13.
[199] Ibid., p. 9.

*Concordia*, a text that was designed to create uniformity and fixity at the core of English monasticism, building on the *Regula S. Benedicti*, which was, in turn, designed to bring conformity to the monasticism of the Christian world in general. Gretsch states 'the *Regularis Concordia* […] was drafted after a synod convened at Winchester in 973 or thereabouts with the aim of standardizing liturgical practice and other aspects of monastic life in the reformed English monasteries.'[200] The *Regularis Concordia* and *Regula S. Benedicti* built on the continental *Capitula of Aachen* (817) and were therefore the (indirect) result of the abortive Carolingian standardizing effort.[201]

In terms of monasticism and theological study, these texts represent a consolidation of both knowledge and practice based on the forms and strictures of the reform movement's philosophy. In terms of the wider canon of texts that survive, this consolidation was formalised by the work of Æthelwold, and continued through his pupils, including Ælfric, and later, by Wulfstan. Æthelwold's major works were designed to prescribe a plan for life intended to go further than a monastic consuetudinary. Gretsch describes the *Regula S. Benedicti*:

> Throughout its pages, instructions for organizing the daily life and spiritual guidance are inextricably intertwined; nearly every chapter makes its readers aware that, in following their monastic vocation, they have chosen a distinctive if austere way of life, and at every turn St Benedict stresses that he composed his *Regula* as an elementary daily and spiritual guide for his *dominici scola seruitii* […] to help his followers to attain perfection in their pursuit of a life devoted to God.[202]

Similarly, the text of the *Regularis Concordia* is highly proscriptive and the opening of the first *caput* is indicative of the tone the text takes: 'incipit ordo qvaliter divrnis sive noctvrnis horis regvlaris mos a monachis per anni circvlvm observari conveniat' ('here begins the order in which the customs of the regular life ought to

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[200] Mechthild Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 125-26.
[201] 'The *Capitula* of Theodulf of Orleans (d. 818), translated twice into English is often taken as a significant manifesto of the revival of preaching.' Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 35.
[202] Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 3-4.

be observed by monks day and night throughout the year').[203] In addition to this proscriptive content, there is an introduction which contains much general information, regarding both the genesis of the text itself and the customs of monastic communities.[204] The foundations laid by the Alfredian revival, and the relative peace enjoyed in the latter half of the tenth century meant that, at this time, England offered peculiarly fertile ground for the ideas contained in these documents and their exhortation to standardize monastic practice. The elite of Anglo-Saxon England were enjoying a period of social and intellectual consolidation after years of violent struggle and, implicitly, uncertainty.

The preoccupation of the monastic establishment in Anglo-Saxon England, then, was with the practice rather than the doctrine of the faith, in emphasis if not in substance. English monasticism represented a fusion of many ideas and mandates that the series of circumstantial socio-political factors outlined above contrived to make relevant and practicable. The *Regularis Concordia* captures these ideas by not only regularizing canonized hours, but also by emphasizing liturgical work and the monastic school: the *schola* (the collective noun for the children being schooled) appear frequently in the text, initially with a warning as to the proper nature of relationship between the brethren and the boys, and later in the main body of the text in stage directions during the hours and saying the *Trina oratio* together.[205] This frequent referral to the *schola* indicates recognition of the way that the monastic institutions exert influence in their schools (and therefore its implicit interest in intellectual betterment), and also through the methodologies used for teaching albeit in a different context from that outlined above.

The mark of these emphases are observable in Ælfric's canon, which he makes explicitly clear is a product of these factors, especially through the *Catholic Homilies* in reference to the liturgical work, and his *Grammar* in reference to the

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[203] *Regularis Concordia: The Monastic Agreement*, ed. by Thomas Symons Medieval Calssics (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), p. 11. Translation is from Symons. The text continues in the same vein for some twelve chapters, regulating every part of the daily offices and such occasional items as care of the sick.
[204] Ibid., pp. 1-9.
[205] Ibid., pp. 8, 14, 16, 18, 42, 48 and 57.

emphasis on the school. The nature of Ælfric's texts, the level of prior knowledge assumed and the complexity of the exegesis and allegory he uses, imply that larger and more diverse audiences were being catered for than in the preceding period, and this is echoed in the later homilies of Wulfstan.[206]

The work of Æthelwold's pupils shows the expanded scope of reform beyond the monastic. These texts took the ideas of monastic reform to a wider audience, especially through their homilies. The nature of the reform movement is expressed in its prescriptive documents, and these same documents suggest some contexts in which Ælfric's work could have been employed. They are also illuminating, however, in what they contain as the philosophy of this reform movement; and this is evinced most eloquently by the sheer volume of references in Ælfric's canon to the works of, especially, Augustine, Bede, Gregory the Great, and Haymo of Auxerre.[207]

In creating these texts, vernacular homilists were not strictly innovating, but rather were deploying forms that predate the reform movement in a potentially new function: that of educating a wide, or at least wider, audience. The content of the homilies is informed both by the sources which the authors used, and by the forms, the textual architecture, from which they extrapolated. Fossils from these earlier source texts survive however, and this element will be important in understanding the textual structures within which information regarding the devil was communicated to the laity.

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[206] Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', pp. 175ff. In Ælfric's case it is possible that this is because he is adapting his material from a monastic to a broader audience. See Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, pp. 53-54. On Wulfstan see *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. by Dorothy Bethurum, (Oxford: 1957), hom. XVIb *Ezechiel on Negligent Priests*, pp. 240-41.

[207] Lapidge, *Library*, pp. 250-66. See Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric's Authorities', in *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg,* ed. by Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieaval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), pp. 51-65. The sources of the *Regularis Concordia* have proven difficult to trace but there is a discussion of some specific aspects of the sources in *Regularis Concordia*, pp. xlv-lii. See below, Section 3.3.

3.2 Models and precedents for Ælfric's project

Ælfric's training left him with a mandate to perform an austere and rigorous devotion to the faith. Ælfric brought to his role, which he defines as 'munuc and mæssepreost', two sets of training, one more academic and private, and another pastoral and public. In addition, he was in charge of the monastic school at Cerne. His response to the demands made of him in the public role is represented by the achievement of the *Catholic Homilies*, texts which, it is acknowledged, were probably written during this early point in his career where his primary function was as teacher in these two different contexts, and supported by the knowledge of the academic training he had enjoyed under Æthelwold.

The preaching materials themselves show a linear descent from those of the European model in the Carolingian Church, through the dependence of the reform movement in England on the *Capitularies of Aachen*. Earlier forms of preaching of the type evinced by the *Catholic Homilies* seem to have fallen into disuse in the Carolingian age. Canons were deeply concerned with the teaching office yet wanted to reserve preaching (*homiliae*) as an episcopal office; catechetical teaching (*sermones*) rather than exegetical teaching was more the aim of the texts. Regardless, the vernacular office is almost certainly a product of this period.[208] The implication is that the laity learned of scripture from the preachers and mass priests, and of morality from the bishops.

Clayton suggests that Carolingian homiliaries are divided into three discrete groups: collections for the monastic night office, collections for devotional reading, and collections for preaching.[209] Wilcox asserts that 'each of these three distinct forms of homiliary had different implied audiences.'[210] Wilcox's study shows that we are able to derive audiences from manuscript context with more certainty than they could be discerned from the internal evidence of individual texts, since it is the context of the text that dictates how that copy was used, regardless of Ælfric's intention. With this in mind, the limitations of knowledge are

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[208] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, pp. 36-37.
[209] Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', p. 160.
[210] Wilcox, 'Ælfric in Dorset', p. 55.

dictated by the limits determined by that which survives in the first instance, and only secondarily by the limitations of the early transmission history, which is now only partially preserved. The rate of survival appears to be so poor that this influence dominates the influence of the quite probably extensive transmission network in that which survives. Identifying which parts of the picture are missing because they have not survived and which parts of the picture are missing because they never existed is the ever-present problem for the scholar concerned with the reception of these texts.

The more strictly rigorous, even minimalist, approach is taken by Gatch and involves an assumption that, as we can never know specifically what has not survived, the basis upon which we should proceed is to present the evidence as indicated by the limits of survival: that is, when discussing a copy that is not attested, to assume that it does not exist because it was not transmitted, rather than because it does not survive, unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary. Gatch argues that, at this early point, the vernacular office is entirely separable from the mass, where a translation and brief explanation of the pericope would suffice. Homilies (especially homilies of the Fathers), by contrast, were reserved for the Night Office, for Sundays and for feasts.[211] On the Continent, therefore, this leaves two main probable uses for the kind of literature we are considering: firstly catechetical use (normative and didactic teaching to an audience), and secondly *lectio divina* and rumination.[212] Clayton's addition of the set of texts, of 'collections for use in preaching to the ordinary (and, one gets the impression, not very devout) laity' is crucial to this study as it suggests that the homilies had a wider audience than Gatch acknowledges, and that in providing the texts for those audiences, Ælfric was innovating less than Gatch assumes.[213]

The restrictive character of Gatch's conclusions is a necessary result of his method and the nature of the survival of evidence. Although there is a paucity of evidence relating to the lesser non-monastic churches, the impact of the reform

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[211] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 36.
[212] Ibid., p. 36.
[213] Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching', p. 160.

movement in textual culture can be easily discerned. Admittedly, this is more apparent in monastic settings, where the patristic tradition of exegetical preaching was certainly kept alive, and where records survive more readily: it is not surprising that the evidence of *lectio divina* appears in these contexts.

Monastic communities were literate communities, though the level of (especially Latin) literacy amongst Ælfric's contemporaries, assumed to be widespread, is both evinced and undermined by Ælfric and Wulfstan's bilingual canons and their criticisms of their brethren and, especially, the clergy. In the century before Ælfric, continental reformers were broadening the range of preaching materials, and a link to the English reform movement is established through the *Regularis Concordia*, which shares or expands on some practices in such reformed centres as Cluny.[214]

Most of the original preaching of the Benedictine reformers was exegetical: the type that Gatch suggests was limited to the monastic institutions. This emphasis carries through to the *Catholic Homilies* where exegetical sermons make up a significant proportion of the whole. Sermons which are predominantly exegetical in their emphasis make up approximately half of the *Catholic Homilies*: 47 of the 95 main texts. The scope of the evidence of distribution, to be discussed in more detail later, admits the possibility, indeed the probability, that use of the *Catholic Homilies* went beyond the use of the homilies upon which they were modelled.[215]

This summary of Carolingian and earlier English practices shows that in their original contexts there is some evidence that Ælfric's precedents were creating texts for a wider audience than that of the cloister, though the weight of critical opinion is against this conclusion. This information is useful to the current study in that it offers a point of comparison. What is more important here is that when the homilists, including Ælfric, used these texts as source material for their homilies the source texts were already outside of their native context which may have confined them not only geographically but also in terms of their function.

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[214] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 40.
[215] See below, Section 6.0.

Their very existence in England as sources also shows that their reach was wider than the contents of the texts, and Gatch's analysis, imply alone. Once constructed, Ælfric's texts take a new direction, and once distributed they again take on a level of agency in creating their audiences beyond the models upon which they draw, and indeed beyond Ælfric's own intentions.

3.3 *Ælfric's sources*

Having established the context of the spread of ideas it is important to consider the ideas themselves. Ælfric's dominant ultimate source, and the foundation of Ælfric's theology, has been shown to be Augustine by Grundy's extensive analysis.[216] Grundy states in her conclusion that

> A comparison of Ælfric's teaching with Augustine's reveals that [...] an overarching theology guides him just as it guided Augustine. Whether or not Augustine is Ælfric's direct source (in terms of the work before him or remembered by him, as he writes), Augustine's theology is his primary source, and this applies even in the doctrines where Ælfric has at his disposal more detail than Augustine left behind.[217]

The weight of evidence, from both recent source-study work and from Ælfric's own statement of method, suggests that Augustine was not in fact the direct source for Ælfric. Rather, Augustine's work was mediated for Ælfric by other authors in the main.

Ælfric acknowledges six predecessors whose work he (though speaking in the plural) 'secuti' (has followed) in his *Latin Preface* to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies*:

> Hos namque auctores in hac explanation sumus secuti. uidelicet Augustinum. ypponiensem. Hieronimum. Bedam. Gregorium. Smaragdum, et aliquando Hægmonem; Horum denique auctoritas ab omnibus catholicis. libentissime suscipitur.[218]

> For, indeed, we have followed these authors in this exposition: namely, Augustine of Hippo, Jerome, Bede, Gregory, Smaragdus, and sometimes

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[216] Lynne Grundy, *Books and Grace: Ælfric's Theology*, (Exeter: Short Run Press, 1991).
[217] Ibid., p. 267.
[218] *CH: First Series*, p. 173.

Haymo, for the authority of these is most willingly acknowledged by all the orthodox.[219]

Ælfric's claim is confirmed by study of his corpus. However, extensive work on the attribution of sources within the homilies, notably by Cross and Hill, has shown that though the initial four, the patristic authors, comprise the majority of the ultimate sources that Ælfric deploys, it is probable that this influence is frequently manifest through intermediaries. Such an intermediary would be an immediate source to Ælfric, in which the ultimate source has either been reproduced in part or has been used in the construction of a new text by the author of Ælfric's immediate source.[220]

Ælfric's compositional style relies heavily on the sources that he used, often referencing the corpus of an individual author in order to bolster or emphasize his point, and synthesizing several sources into his new, vernacular, homily. Hill characterizes this technique as the *compilatio* method of homily construction and she makes powerful arguments as to the implications of the evidence this provides when unpicking Ælfric's compositional methods.[221] Hill decries the 'undeclared patristic bias' in prior source studies, while identifying the works of Haymo, Smaragdus, and Paul the Deacon as the base texts and immediate sources from which Ælfric proceeds.[222] Ælfric leaves Paul the Deacon out of his list

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[219] *Prefaces*, p. 127.

[220] Hill captures the subtleties of the relationship between Ælfric, his sources, and orthodoxy: 'From beginning to end, then, Ælfric defines his position by association *with* patristic orthodoxy, and *against* the contemporary vernacular tradition. He knows himself to be a reformer.' Joyce Hill, 'Reform and Resistance: Preaching Styles in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in *De l'homélie au sermon: Histoire de la prédication médiévale,* ed. by Jacqueline Hamesse and Xavier Hermand (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, Publications de l'Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, 1993), pp. 15-46, p. 32. Hill has written extensively on this subject but a good précis is provided by the following selection: Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric and Smaragdus', *ASE,* 21 (1992), pp. 203-37; Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric, Authorial Identity and the Changing Text', in *The Editing of Old English: Papers from the 1990 Manchester Conference,* ed. by Donald Scragg and Paul Szarmach (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), pp. 177-89; Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric's Sources Reconsidered. Some Cases from the *Catholic Homilies*', in *Studies in English Language and Literature: "Doubt Wisely". Papers in Honour of E. G. Stanley.,* ed. by M. J. Toswell and Elizabeth M. Tyler (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 362-86; Hill, 'Ælfric's Authorities'. See also J. E. Cross, 'Source Analysis of Some Ælfrician Passages', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen,* 72 (1971), pp. 446-53.

[221] Hill, 'Ælfric's Authorities', p. 55-56.

[222] Hill, 'Ælfric and Smaragdus', p. 209. See pp. 204-05, 212 and 213 on Ælfric's method. Ælfric's debt to Paul the Deacon was first identified by Cyril L. Smetana, 'Ælfric and the Early Medieval Homiliary', *Traditio,* 15 (1959), pp. 163-204, and the latest treatment of the influence of

of explicitly acknowledged sources, which Hill suggests is due to the nature of Paul the Deacon's text as a type of *florilegium* with extensive critical apparatus: Paul the Deacon's homiliary provides its reader with the name of the text and source so it is more proper, she suggests, for a subsequent user to quote the ultimate source than Paul the Deacon himself. Ælfric was constantly reconstituting the material available to him in a more homogenized form, more in the style of Smaragdus and Haymo than that of Paul the Deacon, whose method was almost exclusively one of selective quotation.

Moving beyond discrete texts, Ælfric's awareness of a given work within the context of his personal canon is discussed by Szarmach.[223] Considering Ælfric's various treatments of the life of St Martin, Szarmach notes:

> Since Martin is a major saint for the untonsured and the tonsured, Ælfric has an interesting dilemma emerging from his grand compositional strategy: he has already completed one life of Martin for one set purpose [the *Catholic Homilies*], and can he avoid a second Life here for an equally important, if not more important, situation [the *Lives of Saints*]? Clearly, in the decade-long time period [between his composition of the homily on Martin and the version in the *Lives of Saints* …] Ælfric concerned himself with saints' lives in a very focused way, especially in regard to audience, situation and occasion.[224]

Szarmach's approach is to consider holistically the evidence from two compositions which he suggests can be considered as 'vertical' with respect to each other, i.e. they are based on the same material in a general sense but, as compositions for different occasions and audiences, are structured in sympathy with the needs of their respective likely users. Szarmach comes to some

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Paul the Deacon on Ælfric is considered in Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric's Manuscript of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary: a Provisional Analysis', in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice and Appropriation,* ed. by Aaron J. Kleist (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 67-96.

[223] Paul E. Szarmach, 'Ælfric Revises: The Lives of Martin and the Idea of the Author', in *Unlocking the Wordhoard: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Memory of Edward B. Irving Jr.,* ed. by Mark C. Amodio and Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe (Tornto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), pp. 38-61, especially pp. 43-45.

[224] Ibid., p. 43.

interesting conclusions, noting from the comparison of the style of the two texts he considers that the narrative found in the *Lives of Saints* is 'more specific' and contrastingly that of the *Catholic Homilies* 'more direct'.[225] More pertinent to the current study is his suggestion that his analysis has found in Ælfric 'an author at variance with his immediate tradition', continuing

> His interventions and […] restlessness […] come from his well-documented concern for right and true doctrine, for Romantic solipsism is after all culturally impossible, as is a concern for royalties. Ælfric does not wish to promote misunderstanding or 'gedwyld' [heresy]. Yet he realizes that the scribal tradition gives ample scope for the introduction of inaccuracy and error of every sort.[226]

The implication is that Ælfric found that his later work was in need of greater clarity than his earlier *Catholic Homilies*, and the longer text model he employs in the *Lives of Saints* affords him the space to provide it. Perhaps most pertinent is Szarmach's assertion that '[f]or Ælfric, composition was a process, not an event.'[227] Certainly Ælfric's understanding of the function of the text he is composing is shown by Szarmach to be situated not only with respect to its place within the context for which it was to be used, but also within Ælfric's perception of his own body of work. For this to be a concern, Ælfric must have assumed his texts would have been widely and nearly entirely available in sufficient quantity for such considerations to be made apparent.

Szarmach's observation that Ælfric's aversion to heresy is well-documented is no exaggeration: the passage to which Szarmach is referring is among the most quoted of Ælfric's works as it shows a rare and clear statement of authorial intent in a period where even authorship is frequently impossible to establish. Its implications, however, may have been overstated. O'Leary offers a more nuanced interpretation of Ælfric's objections, concluding that

[225] Ibid., p. 50.
[226] Ibid., p. 54.
[227] Ibid., p. 51, see below, Sections 3.4.2 and 5.3.1.

Ælfric took careful and frequent notice of the objections of those whom he considered wise in matters of doctrine, and specific objections from them clearly influenced his judgment. But for his own part he admitted no difficulties with the origins or content of the apocryphal acts of the apostles and viewed them as he would Lives or *passiones* of any other saints.[228]

O'Leary perhaps over-emphasises the absence of evidence of discomfort in the Ælfric's texts in order to make this case, but nevertheless that the evidence admits this interpretation acts as warning that we should be circumspect in applying strict rationales of orthodoxy as Ælfric's motive in any given decision about the depiction of a specific theme.[229]

The process that Ælfric used in composing his homilies is explored more deeply by Whatley who suggests that Ælfric's awareness of reader-response to his texts caused him to complicate further his engagement with his sources. One technique Ælfric employs is to use examples from elsewhere in scripture to mitigate seemingly problematic actions performed by his saintly protagonists. Considering the case of the homily on Clement (*CH* 1.37), a saint whose martyrdom occurs at the whim of the emperor Trajan and provides no opportunity for the usual devices that allow the saint to be portrayed as valiant, Whatley states that Ælfric deploys an 'apologetic coda',

[an] elaborate defensive catalogue [of examples of God's just interaction with saints, which] strongly suggests that some of the sacred narratives of the Christian tradition, whether biblical or hagiographical, were more problematic to some medieval listeners and readers than we might have

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[228] Aideen O'Leary, 'An Orthodox Old English Homiliary?: Ælfric's Views on the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen,* 100 (1999), pp. 15-26.

[229] Ælfric is certainly not uncritical in his approach: his diatribe against the *Visio Pauli* at the start of his *CH* 2 sermon *Item in Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia* indicates that those texts that he considered unworthy deserved not only to be ignored but to be ridiculed as well.

predicted, and that clerics such as Ælfric were, understandably, nervous about this situation.[230]

Whatley also identifies another technique in Ælfric's apparatus, that of judicious abbreviation. In the case of *Passio Petri et Pauli* (*CH* 1.26), Ælfric abridges the text to omit Peter's seemingly arrogant engagement with the emperor Nero, unlike the version to be found in the Blickling collection which retains the episode.[231]

The implications of these insights into Ælfric's method of homily composition are myriad with regard to his deployment of the devil. Firstly, the obvious point should be made that Ælfric's decision to deploy the devil at all is usually not his own, but a function of the material upon which he was basing his composition. Secondly, and despite the first observation, Ælfric's assent to the deployment of the devil is necessary for its inclusion, and, as Whatley identified, he has the option to omit episodes where necessary and where the omission would not substantially disrupt the narrative of the whole. Thirdly, Ælfric's innovation is in the synthesis of sources he achieves in his representations of all the themes with which he deals, including the devil. Finally, Ælfric's project goes beyond one work or one set of works, it is a corpus which comprises two series of around 40 homilies each, a further 30 longer narrative pieces (the *Lives of Saints*), uncollected homilies, letters, a grammar and so on. The variation in this canon establishes that Ælfric is aware of form, audience, diction, and style, and the method of synthesizing a single narrative from many to form any given homily. Each of these aspects must be considered in a context where many of these homilies are provided together to be consumed successively, either by a reader or an audience. The representation of the devil to be found within a given homily is Ælfric's homogenization of several sources which depict it, but Ælfric's collections provide several such homogenized representations which are themselves synthesized by the audience over the course of the church year.

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[230] E. Gordon Whatley, 'Pearls Before Swine: Ælfric, Vernacular Hagiography, and the Lay Reader', in *Via Crucis: Essays on Medieval Sources and Idea in Memory of J. E. Cross,* ed. by Thomas N. Hall (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2002), pp. 158-84, p. 165.

[231] Ibid., pp. 169-71. See below, Section 3.2.2.

3.4 Ælfric's method and its impact

### 3.4.1  *Feria III: De Dominica Oratione* (Cameron number 1.1.21)

To illustrate Ælfric's compositional method I have provided (below) a case study of his homily *Feria III: De Dominica Oratione* (*CH* 1.19). Of all of Ælfric's homilies this is the text that survives in most copies, 18 in all, spread from the late-tenth-century London, British Library MS Royal 7 C.xii to the late-twelfth-century copies in Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343 and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 367. Over half of the copies could plausibly be placed in the first quarter of the eleventh century or earlier. The longevity of the interest in this homily is confirmed by the subsequent copies made at consistent intervals until the last (late-twelfth-century) copies. In terms of attested impact, then, this homily has a *prima facie* claim to being one of the most popular homilies of the early-eleventh century, and more interestingly could be considered, along with *De Initio Creaturæ*, the most immediately popular of Ælfric's texts. The homily is placed on Rogation Tuesday, being one of the sermons to be read in the week immediately preceding Ascension Day (usually falling in May). The high impact of this text is also confirmed by its position in the church calendar and association with the festival of Rogationtide: later, Rogation rituals became village-wide affairs with a focus on the teaching of children (beating the bounds), so it is likely that as late as the thirteenth century, for some at least, this homily was formative in terms of their conception of the devil. Its matter and pitch make it eminently suited to the task.

The homily is also one of the more densely populated with references to devils. Ælfric structures his homily around the seven prayers of the Pater Noster. He interleaves these prayers with passages from Augustine, linked by short expository comments in his own words which often recapitulate that which has already been stated using a source. This is a method of construction called troping when applied to psalms and prayers, and this sermon uses troping to create a

glossed version of the Pater Noster that presents the doctrine of its source in a readily digestible format.[232]

After introducing the Pater Noster in translation, Ælfric gives an explanation of the manner in which Christ as the son of God is our brother adoptively, as God the Son proceeds from God the Father, and He both 'geworhte' (created/made) us and has us as sons 'gewiscendlice' (by adoption). Ælfric's first warning regarding the devil is that we should observe our brotherhood in Christ and

> þæt we ne sceolon na geþafian. þæt deofol mid ænigum unðeawum us geweme fram Cristes broðorrædene;

> witodlice se man þe deofle geefenlæcð. se bið defoles bearn. ná þurh gecynde. oððe þurh gesceapennysse. ac þurh ða geefenlæcunge. 7 yfelum geearnungum;[233]

> that we should not allow the devil with any misdeeds (un-practices) seduce us from Christ's brotherly company.

> Certainly, the man that imitates the devil, he is the devil's child, not through kind, or through his shaping, but through the imitation and evil earnings.

The concept of a brotherly company, builds upon a description of Christ as mankind's head and us as His limbs (at ll. 27-29).[234] These words are Ælfric's own

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[232] Stephen J. Harris, 'The Liturgical Contexts of Ælfric's Homilies for Rogation', in *The Old English Homily: Precendent, Practice and Appropriation,* ed. by Aaron J. Kleist (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 143-72, p. 149. Other examples of troping include *CH* 1.11, *De Dominica Prima in Quadragesima*, with which *Feria III: De Dominica Oratione* shares considerable structural similarities, as well as drawing on similar biblical images to portray the devil.

[233] *CH: First Series*, ll. 31-36, p. 326.

[234] This derives from the image from Ephesians 5:23 of Christ as the head of the church. The inverse is evoked by Ælfric in *CH* 1.11, *De Dominica Prima in Quadragesima* ll. 89-107, where Ælfric builds on 1 John 3:10 'In hoc manfesti sunt filii Dei, et filii diaboli. Omnis qui non est Justus, no est ex Deo, et qui non diligit fratrem suum' ('In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whosoever is not just, is not of God, nor he that loves not his brother.') The image is extended in the same homily, where Ælfric states 'deoful is ealra unrihtwisra manna heafod: 7 þa yfelan men sint his lyma. Nu geþafode god þæt þæt heafod hine costnode: 7 þæt ða lymu hine ahengon' ('The devil is the head of all unrighteous men, and the evil men are his limbs. Now, god allows that the head tempt him and that the limbs hang him.' *CH* 1.11 ll. 34-36).

but he contextualizes and glosses them with scripture: in this instance, the counterpoint is stated and then reiterated with a quotation from Matthew 12.50, the substance of which is then explicated by a (silent) quotation from Augustine's *Sermones*.[235] Having set up the comparison implicitly, the audience perceives Ælfric's comparison at all subsequent points where he refers to either brotherhood or company, and these two regimens of the company of the devil versus the company of Christ establish the tension in the homily. Ælfric's description of behaviours at every level is confined to one of these binary positions. The audience is being offered an interpretation of the world in which all action can be situated on a continuum from good to evil, but ultimately the balance of the scales makes extreme, polarizes even, the most minor act of either position. There is a temporal foreshortening of the perspective for the audience as they are encouraged to build into their conception of the physical world the spiritual effects of their actions. This is balanced by the way in which Ælfric characterizes the prayers of the Pater Noster as being either dedicated entirely to the world to come or to be started in this world and continued there.

Ælfric's source for the rest of the homily is unmistakably Augustine, and he leans on the Commentary to the *Sermon on the Mount* especially. The address of the Pater Noster is established by Ælfric with reference to scripture (Matthew 5.34-35 and Jeremiah 23.24) and contextualized with Augustine.[236] Augustine is principally relied on to provide the description of the wicked man as a temple of the devil 'Swa eac þærtogeanes se fordona man bið deofles templ 7 deofles wunung' ('So, also, contrary to this, the ruined man is a temple of the devil, and a home to the devil', ll. 67-68). This is a theme to which Ælfric returns frequently in the homilies as a whole, and which he inserts into *In Dominica Palmarum* at a late stage of its production.[237] Temple imagery is an important theme for Ælfric as it constitutes part of his description of the internalization of worship: by considering ever smaller microcosms in the world, the church, the congregation, the individual

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[235] Lines 38-40 are from Matthew and 40-52 are from Augustine's *Sermones* PL 38 400. See *FontesFontes*, .
[236] CCSL 34 2. 373-89.
[237] See below, Section 3.4.2.

member of the laity, Ælfric skillfully requires his audience to engage with their own behaviours critically, and as a microcosm that is clearly linked to the great spiritual conflict of which, he makes clear, we are all a part. It also links the forms of worship to the intent of worship, and accords with the way in which Ælfric expresses his distaste for folk remedies and charm healing.[238]

Ælfric's presentation of this part of Augustine's discussion of the temples of God and of the devil is structurally different from the source in which it appears. Ælfric's quotation of Augustine concerns two main points, the reason that prayers are addressed eastward, and the idea of man as a microcosm, a temple dedicated to the cause to which the man is devoted, whether that be God or, through the man's wicked deeds, the devil. Where Augustine deals with the man-as-temple simile and then the reason that earthly buildings dedicated to God look eastward, Ælfric chooses to invert this. The reason is not entirely clear, but the effect is that Ælfric focuses attention from the physical reality of earthly buildings and extends his representation of the theme to consider the metaphorical temples of the man devoted to good and the man devoted to evil. It also reinforces his idea that, as a temple, man can align himself, metaphorically, to God or the devil: the message is that temples are so aligned for this reason, and man is a temple that aligns itself.[239]

Progression from the physical to the spiritual mirrors Ælfric's overall structure which deals with each line of the Pater Noster in turn. In the start of the closing address, Ælfric explicitly separates the prayers of the Pater Noster into two groups:

[238] E.g. 'Se cristenra man þe on ænire [sic] þyssere gelicnysse bið gebrocod 7 he þonne his hælðe secan wile æt unalydefum tilungum oððe æt awyrigedum galdrum oððe æt ænigum wiccecræfte þonne bið he þam hæðenum mannum gelic þe ðam deofolgylde geoffrodon for heora lichaman hælðe 7 swa heora sawla amyrdon;' ('The Christian man that in any of these ways is broken, and he then will seek his health through prohibited practices or cursed practices or any witchcraft, then his is like to the heathen men that offer to devil-images for their bodies' health, and in such a way damaged their souls.' *CH* 1.31, ll. 303-07).
[239] See also *CH* 1.11, ll. 100-07 for a similar description from Ælfric of the way in which the individual chooses to align with either God or the devil.

> þa þreo forman gebedu beoð us ongunne on þyssere worulde. ac hi beoð á
> ungeendode on þære toweardan worulde; […] þa oþre feower gebedu
> belimpað to þisum life. 7 mid þisum life geendiað.[240]

> The first three prayers are begun by us in this world, but they are unending
> in the world to come, […] the last four prayers belong to this life and with
> this life end.

Ælfric moves from the unending to the temporal in his analysis of the prayers, keeping the goal, the eternal, in sight of the audience at all stages, but constantly glossing it with methods of dedication that can be performed now.

Where Ælfric quotes from Augustine in the remainder of the sermon it is in order to discuss temptation.[241] It is Augustine's rationale for temptation that Ælfric deploys: 'oþer is costnung. oþer is fandung.' ('temptation is one thing, trial is another', ll. 147-48).[242] Temptation is rehashed by Ælfric to be the main function of the devil in terms of its interactions with mankind in the present world. It is this idea to which Ælfric returns in the homily *Item in Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia* (*CH* 2.20) where his source is the Anonymous *Visio Fursei*. Of this point, Grundy states:

> Ælfric combines Augustine's teaching with his own conviction that God is
> above the inflexibility which human understanding infers of predestination.
> […] sometimes the devil is right: sometimes the sinner does not repent.[243]

This understanding of grace that Ælfric has developed from Augustine not only follows Augustine in making the function of the devil essential to the function of 'fandung' (temptation), but moves the devil to the centre of the exposition of temptation to the masses. Furthermore, the immediacy of the threat to the congregation is emphasized by Ælfric's long digression from his sources in

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[240] *CH: First Series*, ll. 186-87 and 194-95, p. 332.
[241] 'Deofles costnungum', ll. 105, 207; 'deofles costnunge', ll. 118-19; the same idea is to be found at l. 208. Ibid., pp. 329-32.
[242] Ibid., p. 330. See also *CH* 1.11 *De Dominica Prima in Quadragesima* ll. 138-50. Temptation is here described using Gregory (possibly via Bede) where a more nuanced understanding is extrapolated to a threefold understanding of the method of sin. Gregory *Hom. Evang.* PL 76 1135CD and *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, I.27 pp. 98-103.
[243] Grundy, *Books and Grace: Ælfric's Theology*, pp. 120-21.

explanation of the sixth prayer of the Pater Noster, 'Et ne nos inducos in tentationem'. Ælfric's explanation leans on a more linear understanding, of (worldly) cause and (spiritual) effect: repercussions for action in this life are laid out in terms of the soul's long-term position with respect to God and the devil, in which proximity to either figure is key to the soul's fate.

The digression (ll. 151-77), for which no source has yet been identified, synthesizes, from quotations at the start of the section (drawn from Augustine's *Sermones* and *Sermone Monte Domini*, as well as Matthew 6.13), a rationale for the function of trial on earth, and the devil's role in that trial. The passage uses two images that are of particular interest here. The first is the image of trying gold in a fire: 'Swa swa man afandað gold on fyre. swa áfandað god þæs mannes mod. on mislicum fandungum hwæþer he anræde sy' ('just as man tries gold in a fire, so God tries the mind of man, in diverse trials, whether he is resolute', ll. 153-55). The fire of the test alludes implicitly to the metaphorical fire of purgation and resurrection. Bedingfield suggests that Ælfric's engagement with the imagery of fire is 'unique and poetically-resonant' elsewhere in his corpus, especially in the homily drawing on the *Vita Furseii* to be considered later.[244] This early-stage expression of fire as a metaphor for trial acts as a precursor to more subtle later treatments by Ælfric,[245] but is also, as Bedingfield demonstrates, resonant with the wider tradition, appearing not only in the poetic corpus but also in Vercelli Homilies II and VIII as well as pre-resurrection fires in Blickling Homily X which are more similar to the current context.[246] The second image Ælfric uses is a more elaborate nautical simile that, like the trial by fire metaphor, can be found in cognate forms in the poetic corpus, and is perhaps most reminiscent of *The Seafarer*. Godden notes that 'the image of the damaged ship […] seem[s] to be Ælfric's own' but the striking image, and indeed use of simile generally, is not a particularly Ælfrician trait.

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[244] M. Bradford Bedingfield, 'Anglo-Saxons on Fire', *Journal of Theological Studies,* 52 (2001), pp. 658-77, at p. 659.

[245] See especially *CH* 2.41 *In Dedicatione Ecclesiae* where Ælfric uses the trial by fire of 1 Corinthians 3. Ibid., p. 668.

[246] Ibid., pp. 664-67; *The Vercelli Homilies*; *Blickling Homilies*.

Se man þe wile gelomlice syngian. 7 gelomlice betan. he gremað god; And swa he swiðor syngað. swa he deofle. gewyldra bið. 7 hine þonne god forlæt. 7 he færð swa him deofol wissað. swa swa tobrocen scip on sæ. þe swa færð. swa hit se wind drifð;[247]

The man that frequently sins and frequently atones, he angers God. And as he sins more and more, so he becomes under the power of the devil, and he then turns away from God, and he goes as the devil wishes, just as a broken ship on the sea [which goes] as the wind drives it.

The sea brings with it many biblical allusions, most obviously the Noahcian flood and the crossing of the Red Sea, which also carry significant overtones of baptism. The ark as Church metaphor could also be at work here, though this is perhaps problematic in the context of being driven by forces beyond its control. Rather than propose this as a sly critique of a Church that has lost its way, I suspect that the allusion is more properly considered part of Ælfric's architecture of microcosms, proposing another community isolated by the perils it faces. Regardless of the intention here, the effect for subsequent audiences is that the simile brings to mind baptismal allusion as well as offering a contrast to the fire of the earlier imagery of fire. The simile plays off the complexities of alignment of the personal temple that Ælfric suggests man comprises, and the necessity of strict adherence to the course that proper alignment requires. As a simile without source, this simile currently offers a strong example of Ælfric's own economy of expression and skill with rhetorical devices, shown elsewhere through his selection of text rather than his original text.

Ælfric's approach to the seventh and final prayer is to raise the stakes with a simplification of both his rhetoric and his point: 'God lufað us. 7 deofol us hatað; God us fet 7 gefrefrað. 7 deofol us wile ofsleon gif he mot.' ('God loves us and the devil hates us; God feeds and comforts us. And the devil will slay us if he can', ll. 179-81).[248] Gone are the oblique references to a *corpus diaboli* where a man can choose to dedicate himself to the devil and become his temple, his 'bearn', or his

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[247] *CH* 1.19, ll. 160-64.
[248] *CH: First Series*, p. 331.

limbs in an inversion of the metaphor used for Christ.[249] Rather, Ælfric acknowledges the interaction between the devil and mankind, whereas in the prior passages, a man's interaction with other men align him in a cosmic spectrum with either Christ or the devil. As the homily winds down, the contrasts are stark, the threats are tangible, and the rhetoric is simple.

In a relatively short homily, Ælfric has explained the function of the devil in the world as perceived by his audience, principally via temptation. Temptation as a concept interacts closely with grace as it challenges the mechanism by which predestination occurs, at least for the unlearned.[250] Though temptation is acknowledged as a threat, it is self-determination and the foreshortening of the timeline of repercussions that are most emphatically demonstrated by this homily. By forcing the polar extreme of alignment with the devil on to the interpretation of the most minor sin, and even for frequent sinning combined with frequent atonement, Ælfric's message concerns behavioural change. The method he chooses to instigate this change is not enticement with heavenly reward, but motivation from the collocation of apathy with sin.

This homily is unusual in the set of catechetical sermons in that Ælfric tarries on, and emphasizes, the role of the devil in corrupting the individual. Indeed the only other non-narrative homily from the First Series that features the devil in a significant way is the homily for Palm Sunday which would normally have fallen about a month and a half before the Rogation homilies.

### 3.4.2   *In Dominica Palmarum* (Cameron number 1.1.15)

In this similarly compiled homily, Ælfric draws on Bede for *In Dominica Palmarum*, and also Haymo, Smaragdus, and Pseudo-Chrysostom, and briefly on Jerome and Gregory. The text as it survives in its earliest copy, that to be found in London, British Library MS Royal 7 C.xii, shows signs of late-stage interpolations

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[249] See above, n. 232.

[250] It is more usual to be given an example of a devil functioning as an agent of temptation in the homilies, for example in many of the saints life homilies and in *CH* 1.11 where the devil tempts Christ. See Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, pp. 19-39, especially 35-39, and below for a discussion of the devil as tempter in narrative homilies, Section 3.2.3.

and occasional corrections in Ælfric's own hand.[251] It is similarly well copied to *De Dominica Oratione*, fifteen copies in total, of which five are plausibly early eleventh-century, and all but four probably being pre-twelfth-century. The copy in Royal 7 C.xii, however, with its authorial alterations gives more insight into Ælfric's appreciation of his audience and his approach to the concepts he is addressing.

The homily is structured as an exegesis of the story of Christ's entrance to Jerusalem.[252] The devil becomes an increasingly immediate threat throughout the text and is referred to more frequently as the homily progresses. There are two particularly notable features about the devil's appearance in this setting: firstly, the devil tends to appear in Ælfric's contextual notes to deployed sources, during the recapitulations, as with the Rogation homily; and secondly, Ælfric's corrections to the text which are indicated in Royal 7 C.xii show him to be adding contextual information to the exegesis he is providing. Of Royal 7 C.xii, Clemoes states 'probably the manuscript represents a stage between Ælfric's original composition of the homilies for his own use and his dispatch of a copy to the archbishop [Sigeric]', continuing 'the first parchment copy may have been A's [Royal 7 C.xii] exemplar, for the scribes' many miswritings indicated that they were working from a messy text and probably their exemplar was unbound.'[253] If Clemoes is right, then the interventions that Ælfric makes at this late stage are presumably motivated by a desire for greater clarity prior to their distribution beyond his own community or copy. These additions, then, are likely to be the best place to seek explicit evidence for Ælfric's widely acknowledged anxiety about the potential for

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[251] Clemoes discusses the late-stage additions as being probable from signs of defective punctuation as 'an accidental side-effect of an earlier interpolation of a passage, sentence, or phrase.'*CH: First Series*, p. 126; *Ælfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies: British Museum Royal 7 C.XII, fols. 4-218*, p. 31.

[252] Godden notes that Ælfric leaves the traditional reading for Palm Sunday, Matthew 26.2-27.66 for his Second Series homily for Palm Sunday. *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS SS 18 (London: Oxford University Press for the EETS, 2000), p. 109.

[253] *CH: First Series*, p. 66.

'gedwyld' and his sensitivity to the needs and limitations of the wider audience that his text is about to receive.[254]

Initially the homily operates on the same partitive principle as *De Dominica Oratione* and *De Dominica Prima in Quadragesima*. An aspect or line of the pericope is taken out of context and given meaning through the allegory that Ælfric presents, in this case relying on a combination of Bede and Ps-Chrysostom. Ælfric's first addition is made during a section he has taken from Ps-Chrysostom relating the ass upon which Christ rode to those who worship 'deofolgildum' (at idols, l. 56)

> 7 bugon to ðam anlicnyssum þe hi sylfe wirhton: 7 him to cwædon: þu eart min god; And swa hwylce byrðena swa him deoful on besette. Þa hi bæron. (ll. 57-59)

> And bend towards the likenesses that they themselves have wrought: and say to it: "You are my god". And in such a way whatever burden the devil sets on them, that they bare.

The presence of the third, fully written, 'And', and irregularities in the punctuation, are the main pieces of evidence that Eliason and Clemoes cite for this being a recent interpolation into the text that appears in the Royal manuscript, and it is prominent here, supplied immediately following two instances of the more usual nota in the preceding lines.[255] By imposing the explicit link between the devil and the burden he sets on men at this late stage in the text's development, Ælfric introduces a concept upon which he intends to expand. Immediately prior to this, Ælfric has introduced this idea of burden in another late addition 'and byrðenstrang' ('and strong for burdens', l. 55), and both of these additional comments foreground the later addition of the extended 'byspel' ('parable', l. 111) that Ælfric inserts right in the centre of the homily (ll. 111-21). This parable is rich in elucidating Ælfric's intentions with regard to the scope of the effect he achieves in his audience, through his deployment of the devil, so I will analyse it in some detail.

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[254] See above, Section 3.3.

[255] *Ælfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies: British Museum Royal 7 C.XII, fols. 4-218*, p. 31.

Firstly, this section is inserted immediately following the phrase 'Se ðe ne bið godes tempel. he bið deofles tempel: 7 berð swiðe swáre byrðene, on his bæce' ('He that is not God's temple, he is a temple of the devil, and bears a very heavy burden on his back', ll. 109-10). The idea of the making oneself a temple of either God or the devil is explained in *De Dominica Oratione*, where, as we have seen, Ælfric explains that it is through deeds that a man can bind, and align, himself to either figure. Ælfric's parable (taken from Ps-Chrysostom, but as discussed, added late in the development of the text) concerns kingmaking and the difficulties involved in consenting to rule.[256] The reality of the extent to which the audience has agency in choosing the king is unlikely to be as simple as Ælfric describes it: 'Ne mæg nan man hine sylfne to cynge gedon ac *þæt* folc hæfð cyre to ceosenne þone to cyninge þe him sylfum licað.' ('No man can make himself king, but the people take care to choose as king the one that pleases them', ll. 111-13), but the illusion of choice is necessary in order to make Ælfric's point about the choice of which forces the individual allows to control them. By including the comparison, however, Ælfric bestows upon the audience a notion of power and of importance in making this crucial decision in the way they allow the agencies of God or the devil to control their lives, a decision which Ælfric implies is at least as important as the choice of kings. The vocabulary is that of thegnship, men have the choice whether they wish to 'fylian' ('follow', l. 116) the devil's will, and whether 'he mid deofles weorcum hine sylfne bebint' ('he binds himself to the works of the devil', l. 117). The closing of the parable elucidates that ultimate agency lies solely with God, particularly the power to take remedial action against the unwise decision of binding oneself to the devil. The way Ælfric distributes agency here is key: at the point at which he begins his interpolation of the parable the text implies that it is through apathy that one becomes a temple of the devil (ll. 109-10 quoted above) but the parable itself clarifies that spiritual apathy results in active thegnship of the devil.

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[256] Godden (*CH: Introduction*, p. 115), notes that this particular passage has achieved notoriety in its own right due to what it implies about the nature of kingship in Anglo-Saxon England. Liebermann suggested that this is evidence of a form of sacred kingship, the discussion of which is to be found in Malcolm Godden, 'Ælfric and Anglo-Saxon Kingship', *English Historical Review,* 102 (1987), pp. 911-15.

This late addition, then, manipulates Ælfric's presentation of the distribution of agency, and through it, responsibility. Ælfric has foreshortened the distance between action and consequence, presented the choice as being as important as any earthly decision, and characterises spiritual burden as being easily obtained and difficult to shake. The audience's participation in the decision is elucidated by these modifications. Ælfric is directly manipulating the situation of preacher and audience, and doing so specifically for the case where he is no longer the preacher in the act, but lending his words to another. Ælfric's means for manipulating agency here is the representation of the devil.

Clemoes identifies another late addition to Royal 7 C.xii in the passage, quoted from Gregory, which explains the necessity of Christ's redemptive act through the metaphor of the greedy fish.[257] It is likely that this metaphor was a commonplace to the original (monastic) audience as later in the homily an allusion to this idea appears that shows no obvious signs of being a late addition, and therefore probably predates the explanation. The passage describes how the devil did not understand that Christ was both God and man, and thinking him to be a man, instigated the Jewish people to kill him, but he 'gefredde þa ðone angel cristes godcundnysse' ('felt then the hook of Christ's divinity', ll. 176-77), and choked on it. By introducing this passage Ælfric contextualizes the later description of the Harrowing of Hell, which was probably in the version prior to Ælfric's additions. This passage certainly clarifies the situation for an audience without monastic training, but that Ælfric felt that such clarification was necessary for an audience beyond his own cloister is indicative of his anxieties regarding the wider circulation of his texts. All of the interpolations that Clemoes identifies in this homily in some way elucidate the devil's function in the world and the rationale by which the devil has the opportunity to cause problems for humanity. In effect, considering the stage at which Clemoes suggests Ælfric is making these alterations, it seems to be the case that Ælfric is aware that the commonplaces understood in

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[257] The addition appears on fol. 75r/18 and ends at 75r/25. On this folio, a later hand has also added the note 'se deful' at the end of line 14, possibly as a marker to this well-known description of the way in which the devil forfeited his right over the souls of humanity. *Ælfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies: British Museum Royal 7 C.XII, fols. 4-218*, p. 31.

the cloister, and the learning that underpins and informs an audience listening to his sermons, was unlikely to be as thoroughly understood by the audience he expected to receive the text after it went through Sigeric's hands. Given that the interpolations mostly include elucidatory material concerning the function and tactics of the devil, and the dangers of temptation, it is not over-ambitious to suggest that it is to avoid 'gedwyld' that Ælfric makes these interpolations. Furthermore, if Clemoes is right about the stage at which Ælfric made these alterations, he was likely to have written his *Preface* within six months.[258] The concern Ælfric shows in manipulating the presentation of the devil to a more clear and more immediate description is occurring immediately prior to his engagement with the Antichrist material he is to relate to the preachers of the texts, but not the readers.[259]

In the version of the homily prior to the Royal 7 C.xii additions, the homily included far fewer allusions to the devil, but those that did appear may have had special interest to the monks of a community. Ælfric describes Christ's time in the temple (no doubt referencing Ælfric's link between the worshipper and their devotions as temples), and as they are introduced the temple elders are described in terms analogous to the devil: 'þa namon þa heofodmen. andan. ongean his lare.' ('Then the head-men took envy against his teachings', ll. 159-60). This is clarified explicitly in another Ælfrician recapitulation: 'þeahhwæðere ne nydde he na þæt iudeisce folc tó his cweale. Ac deoful hi tihte to ðam weorce.' ('However he did not oblige the Jewish people to his death, but the devil compelled them to that work', ll. 164-64). Ælfric's anti-Semitism has been explored by Scheil who suggests that for Ælfric, 'Jews are both an unsettling variable and a useful rhetorical bludgeon: Ælfric does not want a faulty understanding (and imitation) of Jews to further fray the social fabric, but the Jews provide a useful exemplum (both positive and negative) when the occasion demands.'[260] Obviously it is in their use as a negative example that Ælfric associates them with the devil, but the frequency of this

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[258] See *CH: First Series*, pp. 64-98 especially 65-66; and *Ælfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies: British Museum Royal 7 C.XII, fols. 4-218*, p. 29.
[259] See below, Section 5.3.1.
[260] Andrew P. Scheil, 'Anti-Judaism in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*', *ASE,* 28 (1999), pp. 65-86, p. 86.

association is striking. In Ælfric's narratives the devil uses Jewish agents to his own ends, in opposition to Christ and His proxies. In Ælfric's discussion of the manner in which any individual can become a tool of the devil, he perhaps implicitly ameliorates the seemingly harsh stance he takes against the Jews of his narratives, but it is likely, as Scheil notes, that Jewish communities were not an observable phenomenon for Ælfric as their settlement in England probably post-dates Ælfric's work.[261]

The closing of the homily includes the description of the victory of Christ over the devil on our behalf as befits the Palm Sunday sermon, where the palm is the symbol of victory. The description, however, is formulaic, and is only partially complicated by the use of 'miclan deofol' ('great devil', l. 203) which is unusually neutral as a term, though in the context it serves solely to elevate Christ's victory to something that is more of a triumph than it may otherwise have been perceived to be.

In his late-stage edits, then, Ælfric's concerns are with the representation of the devil, the clarity with which he can communicate ideas (and especially metaphors), and the immediacy of the threat posed by the devil, apathy and poor decisions. By building into the decision-making process a more asserted understanding of consequences that are not necessarily manifest in this world, but in the next, Ælfric is inciting his audience to behavioural change. The stage at which he makes these alterations implies that the audience he anticipates for his collection is less likely to understand the moral point of his sermon without further clarification and worldly examples, such as the simile of the choice of king and the metaphor of the greedy fish. All of these modifications alter the devil's function in the context of Ælfric's homily, but his genesis and his form are not affected.

### 3.4.3 *De Initio Creaturæ* (Cameron number B.1.1.2)

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[261] 'Scholarly consensus maintains that Jews only settled in England after the Norman Conquest' ibid., p. 65, note 1. Scheil cites an extensive list of secondary sources to corroborate this assertion.

Thus far the analysis has concentrated on the functional purpose of the devil as presented in the homilies that are most popular in terms of their early transmission. In *In Dominica Palmarum*, Ælfric hints at the manner in which the devil came to exist, in a quotation from either Bede or Haymo (ll. 151-56) which describes how men increase the host of angels 'þe se feallenda deoful gewanode;' ('that the falling devil diminished', l. 154). Ælfric's understanding of the way in which the devil operates in the world is explained in the abstract in order to elucidate the mechanisms by which the behavior of a member of the audience is typified in the spiritual world beyond their comprehension. In the opening homily of the First Series, however, Ælfric discusses how there came to be angels and devils in the world.

*De Initio Creaturæ* shows peculiar characteristics in its transmission history as it is primarily copied early in the life of the homilies. It is well attested in the record but especially so in the first half of the eleventh century, appearing alongside *De Dominica Oratione* in all but three of its early copies, and appearing separately from either of the above mentioned homilies in the following early manuscripts: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 198; London, British Library MS Cotton Otho B.x; and Oxford, Brasenose College MS Latham M.6.15, each of which can be dated to the first half of the eleventh century or earlier.[262]

Fox observes that '*De Initio Creaturæ*, which provides Ælfric's first and most detailed comment upon the angels, is an attempt to present the most important moments in Christian history, from creation to the Last Judgement.'[263] This homily sits in the canon of Ælfric's works at a very early point, probably being composed before or during 989, but its subsequent popularity means that for the majority of Ælfric's working life, this would have been one of the pieces for which he was most

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[262] It should be noted that this pattern of copying could be accounted for by a greater early interest in this homily as privileged over the other homilies in the collection. It is possible, however, that this high proportion of early copies is simply a function of the fact that the earliest copies, by necessity more closely related to the original author (or his influence) than any to be made a substantial period after his death, were more influenced by Ælfric's stated desire to keep the collection as a whole. If this is to be observed, any partially completed project would be highly likely to contain this, the first homily of the collection.

[263] Michael Fox, 'Ælfric on the Creation and Fall of the Angels', *ASE,* 31 (2002), pp. 175-200, p. 177.

well-known. It is fitting, then, that it is also one of his more ambitious, being of a different class from the previous two homilies in that it contains mostly text for which no other source has been identified. Fox asserts: 'Ælfric's treatments seems to me to be without direct source. [...] Still, Ælfric's main source is clearly scripture.'[264] Ælfric's deployment of sources is mostly confined to two extended passages which use Bede in conjunction with biblical quotations to relate two major episodes. The first casts around Genesis 2 to relate the creation, and the second uses the same approach with respect to Genesis 3 to relate the fall of man. Apart from these sections, the homily is either original material or the sources have been lost or are not accounted for.

Fox's discussion is extensive and thoroughly pertinent, but to avoid duplicating his work here a few crucial points will be gleaned. Firstly, Ælfric, unlike Bede, is content to supply a narrative of the creation that includes the fall of the angels. The creation of the angels is not related in Genesis but in patristic writing and is traditionally situated on the first day. Here, however, Ælfric is content to situate the creation of the angels simply at some undefined time prior to the creation of mankind. The departure from his usual description (indicated, for example, in his *Hexameron* where the creation is situated on the first day)[265] is significant because it is Ælfric, an author usually reticent with regard to theological innovation, but whose return to the subject throughout his career implies that he stood by his assertions and that they were made soberly.

The return to the material is similarly important. As discussed above,[266] Ælfric was aware of his works as a canon, even where they had been split into the various collections in which he distributed them. The canon, however, includes five discussions of this matter: *De Initio Creaturæ*, the *Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, the *Exameron*, the *Letter to Sigeweard* and the *Letter to Wulfgeat*. At least some of this reworking may have been intended to replace the early version that we find in the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* though the audiences of the other treatments are

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[264] Ibid., p. 193.
[265] Godden (introduction), p. 9.
[266] See above, Section 3.3, at nn. 221-25.

likely to have been far more exclusive and learned.[267] If this conjecture is true it implies that Ælfric wanted to exercise control over his canon as a revisionist, as well as that he found the material important enough to warrant several treatments. If not, the evidence at least shows that this topic was one of which Ælfric frequently received requests for expositions, which may go some way to explaining *De Initio Creaturæ*'s high rate of early transmission: those not in direct contact with the author may also have been responding to the desire to have an explanation of this facet of the creation narrative in creating copies of this sermon.

Building on Day, Fox suggests a reason as to why Ælfric may have considered the creation and fall of the angels such an important part of the creation story and felt that it was both warranted and necessary that he add to the narrative found in Genesis:

> In the education and spiritual guidance of both clergy and laymen, [...], the foundations of world history would obviously have been of paramount importance. 'In general', Day concludes, 'Ælfric's production of several versions of the "narratio" – as well as his use of similar material in the *Exameron* – has the aim of providing a framework for the unlettered, of placing each particular point of Christian doctrine in the [sic] relation to the pattern of the whole.' Indeed, if this is the case, such an aim is consonant with Ælfric's overall plan, to provide England with 'a summary of Carolingian – and English – religious learning'. [268]

 This synthesis is not without its problems in that, following Clemoes' arguments regarding Ælfric's biography and the relative time-frames of his first writing this sermon, there is no necessary condition that Ælfric had laymen in mind as audience when initially writing its content. Indeed, the weight of evidence lies

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[267] Fox, 'Ælfric on the Creation and Fall of the Angels', pp. 177-78. Fox cites F. E. C. Dietrich, 'Abt Ælfric, Zur Literatur-Gesichte der angelsächsischen Kirche', *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie,* 28 (1855), pp. 187-594 for his extended discussion of the argument for this being the case.

[268] Fox, 'Ælfric on the Creation and Fall of the Angels', pp. 199-200, quotations from Virginia Day, 'The Influence of the Catechetical *narratio* on Old English and Some Other Medieval Literature', *ASE,* 3 (1974), pp. 51-60, at p. 59 (who does not include Fox's erroneous 'the'), and Peter Clemoes, 'Ælfric', in *Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature,* ed. by Eric Stanley (London: Nelson, 1966), pp. 176-209, at p. 183.

against such a hypothesis, and as such this is not a case where it is necessary to challenge Gatch's arguments regarding the sermons' likely use. Clemoes does not indicate that there are any obvious late-stage additions to the text as it is found in Royal 7 C.xii, the copy closest to the authorial copy, and given the continued fascination Ælfric shows with the content of the work (described above) it is no great stretch to assume that this was a subject upon which Ælfric had ruminated extensively while learning at Winchester and teaching at Cerne Abbas prior to recording the text. That said, its adoption on the scale indicated above, along with the context that between the years 1002 and 1018 Ælfric produced five more explanations of similar themes, imply that the content received a wide audience, regardless of Ælfric's intention for his homily as contained in the First Series.

With this extensive re-interpretation and sustained engagement that the content of this sermon enjoyed from Ælfric, it is appropriate to prioritize the interpretation of the devil found herein as Ælfric's own view of the likely form and function of the character, as at this point Ælfric has no other party to consider in his representation than the immediate audience he perceived. Ælfric describes the creation of ten hosts, but does not provide a name for the tenth host, as it rebelled. Ælfric quotes Isaias 14.12-15 for the actual wording of the establishment of the tenth host and especially in defining the leader of this host as Lucifer. The angels are turned to 'laðlicum deoflum' ('loathly devils', l. 38), 'hellewite' ('hellish-torment', l. 44) is prepared for them, and 'let befeallan on ðæt ece fyr þe him gegearcod wæs for heora offermettum;' ('caused them to fall in that eternal fire, that for them was prepared, because of their pride', ll. 44-45).

Ælfric deals with the potential paradox of God creating the devil in order to vex mankind by quoting Augustine, probably via Haymo, in order to establish that it was the devil's free will that made him able to fall, and his pride that caused him to do so.[269] Throughout the remainder of the homily the devil is characterized through pride ('modignysse', l. 66), and disobedience ('ungehyrsumnysse', l. 82), and his tactics when engaging humans are deception ('beswican', 'beswicen',

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[269] The quotation is from Haymo, Hom. Temp. *PL* 118.216D, which draws on Augustine Tract. Evan. Iohannes., and comprises, in Ælfric's text, ll. 56-61.

'deceive', ll. 120, 211) and seduction (Eve is 'forspanen. ðurh deofles lare', 'seduced by the devil's counsel', l. 139, and later, God is aware that Adam's transgression is because 'þam deofle ðe hine forlærde', 'the devil seduced him', l. 159) but this is not a psychologically realized account, rather its function is to provide an explanation of the ways in which the devil operates. Ælfric also uses this homily to establish the trope that devils inhabit idols (ll. 211-21), that devils have the ability to perform possessions (ll. 258-260) and that the devil has possession of the souls of the wicked in hell, in the closing of the homily (ll. 284-93).

This is not intended, by Ælfric, to be a full description of the devil, rather it introduces ideas that will be expanded upon and given nuance by the subsequent homilies. The function of the devil has been broadly defined but, beyond that, his actions in the world have been mentioned rather than described. The form of the devil has only been alluded to. It is this devil of form that will be the principal concern of the next chapter.

3.5 Conclusions

This discussion of the types of decision that Ælfric was making with regard to his depiction of the devil has implications on several different levels which it is necessary to explain in turn. Firstly, in terms of Ælfric's perception of the task he had before him, the devil was a character that offered Ælfric a great opportunity to explain, to a large audience for the first time, both the way in which sin came into the world and also how it operates in the context of grace. Ælfric's texts' performability and the demand for copies of the texts that followed their composition (as evinced by the numerous early copies that survive) imply that it was in these texts, discussed above, that Ælfric had most influence in terms of shaping understanding not only of the devil but of the faith.

In each of these homilies, which, through no direct act of Ælfric's, became influential, the devil plays an important part. In the first case, *De Dominica Oratione*, the devil's function in temptation and its interaction with grace is explored through the medium of the Pater Noster. By leaning on this key text which was ubiquitous, Ælfric is taking the familiar and elucidating it with context and deep analysis of its implications, in each part of the text, relating the function of the prayer to its effects on and with the devil. In the second case, *In Dominica Palmarum*, Ælfric edits his text at a late stage, before it reaches wide circulation, providing changes which are adopted in the corpus of texts that were transmitted further, and all of which contextualize the devil in some way. Ælfric, though clearly finding this work to be important and in need of discussion and explanation, recognized that as it hit a wider audience it would need to be clarified and made utterly plain, anxious in case it were received and misunderstood by 'sum dysig man' (an unlearned man).[270] In the final case, Ælfric, finding that the canon of sources available to him was lacking a rounded explanation of the creation and fall of the angels, synthesized one in order to provide a narrative to this event that he felt most important to understanding the creation of man. Ælfric uses this first homily in the First Series to introduce the themes upon which he intends to expand in later homilies.

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[270] This quotation is to be found in Ælfric's *Preface to Genesis*, *Prefaces*, p. 116, l. 7.

Ælfric's understanding of the task before him shows signs of a sensitivity to the needs of a broad audience, but it is in his late-stage alterations that this sensitivity is most visible. By the time the *Catholic Homilies* left Cerne Abbas, Ælfric had re-engaged with and clarified his own material, and shows a particular anxiety that his representation of the devil is careful and considered. The characteristics of that representation are the concern of the next chapter.

4.0 The devil of form in Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*

Having established Ælfric's portrayal of the function of the devil in the great redemptive cycle in the *Catholic Homilies*, it is necessary to consider the form in which Ælfric depicts the *character* of the devil where it appears. As characters, devils and the devil occur most frequently in the *vitae* that Ælfric provides in his homily collections. In what follows I will consider the physical depictions and narrative functions of the devil and devils that occur most frequently, and consider how they relate to poetic and visual representations of the devil to establish how stable the image is in the Anglo-Saxon imagination. As teaching texts, the lessons of the homilies are both explicit, during the author's didactic digressions, and implicit in the examples of the lives relayed in their narratives. The audience, then, constructs its understanding of the concepts with which the homilies are concerned both explicitly, when being told how to interpret or understand, and implicitly, by digesting the information contained in the telling of the stories to synthesize an order of the world that is consistent with the conceit of the narrative. Having heard a homily such as *Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli* in which the message as stated in the coda is 'do not use witchcraft to cure your ills', an audience also learns that devils live in images, are black and can fly. This type of information is applicable to their experience – on a literal level, if they were to see a devil, they might be able to identify it as such through its features, but on a figurative level the actions and intentions behind evils manifest in day-to-day life are explained in this worldview, constructed through the texts they have received.

Old English hagiographic writing has received a great deal of attention in recent decades and our understanding of the relationship between Anglo-Saxon authors, their material, and the sources on which their texts draw, has developed rapidly.[271] Unlike the homilies analyzed in the preceding chapter, most of the narrative homilies take one principal source, usually a Latin *vita* (though also possibly a biblical or patristic narrative episode), and translate it into the vernacular, abridging where such action will not undermine the internal

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[271] For a survey of recent work, see Claire Watson, 'Old English Hagiography: Recent and Future Research', *Literature Compass,* 1 (2004), pp. 1-14.

consistency of the narrative, in order to make a sermon of suitable length. This dual process of translation and abridgement is characterized by Whatley for Ælfric's *Saints Lives*, but is equally applicable in this context:

> By contrast with the self-conscious artistry of the hagiographic poems, the prose legends with few exceptions present a rather bland, simple surface (Gerould terms them 'pedestrian'), closely dependent on their hagiographic sources, and they provide little overt evidence of creative invention. The prose texts, after all, are assumed to have been written to edify the unlettered laity, the *simplices* and *idiotae* as Ælfric calls them, and to strengthen their faith with brief, undemanding versions of the often lengthy and potentially tedious *vitae* and *passiones*.[272]

Here more than ever, then, we must be aware of the previously stated axioms that the decision to deploy the devil in these texts is usually not Ælfric's but that of the author of his source, yet Ælfric's assent to the deployment, and selection of the source, indicate his endorsement of its value in the context he creates for it.[273] Whatley's discussion of Ælfric's method represents a point of comparison for Whatley's argument regarding anonymous homilies, but his insights are pertinent here. Regarding Ælfric's *Apollinaris* (*Lives of Saints* XXII) Whatley states that Ælfric felt his source, the anonymous *Passio S. Apollinaris*, 'required some careful abridgement' which allows Ælfric to present 'a much smoother portrait of a holy bishop'.[274] From the careful omissions Ælfric makes during the process of translation, Whatley suggests that, instead of conveying his source's exact sense, Ælfric is 'conveying the sense that Ælfric perceives to be in his readers' best interests'.[275] If this analysis is accepted, abridgement, or conversely, lack of abridgement, is informative to the modern reader aiming to understand Ælfric's intentions. By making these decisions, Ælfric's abridgements and understanding of

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[272] E. Gordon Whatley, 'Lost in Translation: Omission of Episodes in Some Old English Prose Saints' Legends', *ASE,* 26 (1997), pp. 187-208, p. 188. Whatley's references are to G. H. Gerould, *Saints' Legends*, (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916), p. 94, and to the Latin *Preface* to the Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*, see *Prefaces*, p. 111.

[273] See above, Section 3.3.

[274] Whatley, 'Lost in Translation', pp. 190 and 191 respectively.

[275] Ibid., p. 191.

his audience's 'best interests' have an effect on the understanding and representations portrayed to all his audiences, intended or otherwise.

Beyond abridgement, though, we should be sensitive to the way in which Ælfric shapes a cycle of homilies for his audience. Ælfric's desire for the texts to move together implies that in his mind they function as a unit. Despite this characteristic, references from one homily to another are infrequent and only ever indirect, if indeed they are intended to be construed as connections at all. The extent to which audiences viewed the homilies as a unit is unclear, but the homilies present a highly managed interpretation of the material with which they are concerned. This may have been a salient feature only to Ælfric's immediate audience at Cerne Abbas, and the later transmission history of the series indicates that some, indeed most, later audiences would not have been exposed to the homilies as a unit in this way.

Even if we take a minimalist view of Ælfric's own perception of his audience (i.e. one that assumes an immediate audience in his context as 'munuc and mæssepreost' at Cerne Abbas), these texts are designed to teach, probably within a monastic community in the first instance, and are not primarily designed to précis large amounts of patristic texts. Rather, they perform the function of providing examples to the audience of the behavior of exemplary figures. During this process, however, the texts also provide explanations of how the devil, devils and evil people, can manifest themselves and cause discord in the world as adversaries to the holy. Furthermore, Ælfric shows himself to be highly selective in his sources, explaining even to the congregation that some sources are not reliable and should not be heeded. The immediately apparent case is Ælfric's rejection of the *Visio Pauli* in the opening of his sermon *Item in Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia* (*CH* 2.20): 'Humeta rædað sume men. ða leasan gesetnysse. ðe hi hatað paulus gesihðt. nu he sylfsæde. þæt he ða digelan word gehyrde. þe nan eorðlic mann sprecan ne mot.' ('How do some men read the lying work, that they call Paul's vision, when he himself said that he heard secret words that no earthly man may speak?', ll. 14-16). What is the utility in explaining this to the audience? Ælfric's decision to do so may reflect the wide spread of the influence of the *Visio Pauli*, and it may be that he considered it a genuine concern that audience members would be familiar with

this work, presumably from other vernacular homilies that had been performed to them in the past. Alternatively the function of this statement could be that Ælfric intends to demonstrate his education and the veracity of what he has selected. Internal references to veracity mean that when the preacher is performing Ælfric's texts, the information as delivered is not reliant on the same *in absentia* authority of other vernacular homilies, but rather contains its own proof within the text. Ælfric's critical engagement with the veracity of his sources, as with the *Visio Pauli*, indicates that the corpora he presents in translation have not been slavishly copied, or selected out of a limited library (which the copious implied library he had access to from the range of sources in his works shows to be a false assumption), but rather that he found these works most suited to his audience's 'best interests'.[276]

In the homilies, the line between the figurative and the literal is constantly blurred when the devil is drawn upon, and this is a practice not limited to Ælfric but rather is symptomatic of the ambiguities inherent in the devil's function and manifestation in the world.[277] The effect on subsequent, broader, audiences is that what seems in the first instance explanatory, a guide to signs of evil presences and how to deal with them, in fact becomes a set of moral principles that must be applied carefully by the individual to the situations of temptation that they face. Over the course of a year, extended religious festival, or month, the audience is exposed to contrasting manifestations of evil which rely to a lesser or greater extent on the presence of the devil. Recognizing a devil by its works, then, is no easy task, and it is little wonder that physical depictions are relatively scarce as

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[276] Based on this passage, arguments have been made that Ælfric's position is antipathetic to all apocryphal works, but O'Leary's study indicates that Ælfric's relationship with his sources was more complicated and sympathetic to the subtleties of each case than such argument allow. See, e.g. Clemoes, 'Ælfric', and for O'Leary's rebuttal, O'Leary, 'An Orthodox Old English Homiliary?: Ælfric's Views on the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles'. Of this view, Whatley suggests that if Ælfric was averse to certain texts 'It now seems more likely, to judge from the evidence of surviving texts and manuscripts, that Ælfric's attitude was idiosyncratic rather than representative, since most of the works he disapproved of seem to have been quite acceptable to his contemporaries at reform centers such as Winchester, where Ælfric himself was schooled.' Whatley, 'Pearls Before Swine: Ælfric, Vernacular Hagiography, and the Lay Reader', p. 159, especially n. 6.

[277] The use of the devil as a figurative abstract occurs throughout scripture, exegesis and the homilies. See e.g., Matthew 13.39 vs Matthew 15.22. Allegorical readings of the devil such as Matthew 13.39 implicitly rely on the devil being able to act without being manifestly present.

any strict typology of representation could limit the number of forms of threats against which an audience member stayed vigilant.

In what follows I have considered the way in which the tradition upon which Ælfric draws, and as Ælfric presents it, is self-referential and contains some consistency across representations. The manner in which these representations were received by the audience in the face of their cultural context is also considered, along with analogues to their experience of the themes with which Ælfric deals. Ælfric's narrative homilies are based on either an apostolic narrative or one of the saints in the Patristic or later era, so there is a narrative distance, generally, imposed by the significant amount of time between the stories as they are told and the contemporary contexts in which they are performed. Ælfric elides this gap using methods typified by those described above, where temporal foreshortening forces the consequences of action into the decision-making process for the individual.[278]

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[278] See above, Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.

4.1 The physical devil

In *S. Benedicti, Abbatis* (*CH* 2.11) the devil is provoked into manifesting himself to Benedict as the saint has overthrown a temple to Apollo on Monte Cassino, and replaced it with a church dedicated to St. Martin. The devil's appearance is arresting in the narrative, as up to this point the devil has either acted off-stage (ll. 30-36) or in an adopted form, as 'an blac þrostle' ('a black thrush', l. 46), and 'on anes blacan cildes hiwe' ('in the form of a black child', l. 112). When the devil does finally appear in his own form, the depiction extends the description from the previous disguises considerably:

> Þa ne mihte se ealda deofol þas dæda mid swigan forberan. ac mid openlicere gesihðe hine æteowode ðam halgan were on atelicum hiwe. mid byrnendum muðe. and ligenum eagum wedende him togeanes. and mid micclum hreame his sið bemænde. swa þæt ða gebroðru ða deofellican stemne swutellice gehyrdon  (ll. 177-82)

> Then no longer could the old devil forbear these deeds in silence, but open to sight he appeared to the holy man in a terrible hue, with burning mouth and fiery eyes raging towards [him] and with a great cry bemoaned his exploit, so that the brothers heard the devilish voice plainly.

This description is reminiscent of a similar episode in *Passio Sci Bartholomei Apostoli* (*CH* 1.31) where a devil called Ashtaroth has been ousted from his residence in an idol ('deofollican anlicnysse', ll. 193-94) by an angel who states 'god bebad me þæt ic ðone deofol eowerum gesihþum ær æteowie; Ne beo ge afyrhte þurh his gesihðe' ('God bade me that I show the devil to your sight. Be not afraid of his visage', ll. 183-85). The physical depiction has marked similarities with that of the devil that Benedict enrages:

> He wearð ða æteowod swilce ormæte silhearwa. mid scearpum nebbe. mid sidum bearde his loccas hangodon to þam anccleowum. his eagan wæron

fyrene spearcan sprencgende. him stod sweflan lig of þam muðe. he wæs

egeslice gefiþerhamod. & his handa to his bæce gebundene; (ll. 187-91)[279]

He was then shown as an immense Ethiopian, with sharp features and with

a wide beard, his hair hung to his ankles, his eyes were springing fiery

sparks, fires of brimstone stood in his mouth, he was dreadfully winged,

and his hands [were] bound to his back.

The image of the Ethiopian reappears in another idol-breaking scene in *Passio SS. Apostolorum Simonis et Judae* (*CH* 2.33), where the apostles are being put to death; as a final act, the apostles exhort the devils that occupy two idols, one to the sun and one to the moon, to leave their images and break them to pieces. The devils are obliged to do so 'and ðærrihte eodon ut on ealles ðæs folces gesihðe. twegen blace silhearwan of ðam anlicnyssum. and hi tobræcon. and mid wanunge aweg flugon;' ('and straightaway went out, in view of all the people, two black Ethiopians, from the images, and they broke [the images], and with lamentation, flew away.', ll. 247-50). In this last depiction there is no elaboration on the features of the 'silhearwan', rather the audience, one assumes, would have to pick up on the image and understand its implications. Context provides this to some degree, but it is difficult to discern whether the intention is for the Ethiopian to lend a demonic aspect to a creature, or if it is simply the case that Ethiopians are viewed as demonic.[280]

The blackness itself is obviously part of a widespread colour vocabulary that takes darkness as evil and light as good, and Ælfric's depiction of the pre-lapsarian devil as 'leohtberend' ('light-bearer', *CH* 1.2, l. 29) serves to emphasize

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[279] Godden notes of Ethiopians that Ælfric was 'probably [...] sufficiently familiar with the [term Ethiopians] as a term for devils to substitute it here. The *Old English Martyrology*, which uses the same legend, similarly has Sigelhearwan (OE Martyrology, II.186-7).' *CH: Introduction*, p. 263.

[280] Another example of the appearance of a black demon is in *Depositio St Martini Episcopi,* where there appears to Martin 'an atelic sceadu on sweartum hiwe' ('a horrid shade in a black hue', *CH* 2.34, ll. 141-42), here, however, this is not a demon but the spirit of a criminal to whom a shrine has been erected in error, by those who later thought his burial place to be holy. The colour vocabulary, therefore, extends to sin, or perhaps derives from it, which accounts for its association in this context with the sinner not directly linked to the devil.

the distance the devil has fallen, from light-bearer to his 'blacan hiwe'.[281] The image of the Ethiopian first appears in monastic literature in the *Vita Antonii* of Athanasius (ca. 357) but by the time of the *Catholic Homilies* (and well before) some of the topoi have become conflated such that, although we can discuss the generic set of images and associations to which an author can appeal, any effort to find a strict lineage of a particular image would be misguided.[282] As such, this corpus of representations draws freely on the tradition identified by Brakke in his analysis of the Ethiopian demon: the black boy of the story of Benedict is an echo of the first appearance of this topos in the *Vita Antonii*, and it is this tradition upon which Gregory is probably drawing in his *Vita* of Benedict, and which Ælfric reproduces in his homily.[283] A note of caution should be added here in that it is neither the case that blackness is confined to the devil, nor that the devil is limited to manifesting himself with blackness. Later I will discuss some instances in which the devil can appear in other forms than the black, and certainly the poetic corpus contains numerous instances where the, or a, devil is able to present itself in a form that does not have overtly negative associations.[284]

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[281] On the colour vocabulary of insular art see J. J. G. Alexander, 'Some Aesthetic Principles in the Use of Colour in Anglo-Saxon Art', *ASE,* 4 (1975), pp. 145-54. Ælfric refers to the devil as 'Leohtberend' in *CH* 1.1 *De Initio Creaturæ*. It is striking too that the representations found in *CH* 2.33 and 2.11 both associate with heavenly, light-bearing bodies. This is possible as an inversion of 'leohtberend' but is not an Ælfrician innovation.

[282] For an overview of the history of the representation of demons as Ethiopians see David Brakke, 'Ethiopian Demons: Male Sexuality, the Black-Skinned Other, and the Monastic Self', *Journal of the History of Sexuality,* 10 (2001), pp. 501-35. As a point of interest, the only surviving copy of the *Vita Antonii* that is associated with Anglo-Saxon England postdates Ælfric, the relevant section of the manuscript being dated to s. xi[ex]. The manuscript was probably produced in either Worcester or York and has a Worcester provenance in the medieval period. This is MS Worcester, Cathedral Library F.48 (Gneuss number 761). Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: a List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100*, (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), p. 113. Lapidge has identified its presence in two booklists, one the booklist of Saint-Vaast, Arras, made by Sæwold of Bath (dated to 1070) and another that is possibly associated with Peterborough, but is again later being dated to s. xi/xii. See Lapidge, *Library*, lists VIII and XIII.

[283] Brakke, 'Ethiopian Demons'.

[284] See e.g. the devil's disguise in the form of Jesus in *Depositio St Martin Episcopi*, below at n. 293, and the devil with the 'hæleðhelm' in *Genesis B. Genesis* appears in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Junius XI, alongside *Exodus*, a poem in which the Ethiopian lands are to be avoided by the Israelites in a passage not drawn from the biblical account of Exodus. Kilburn-Small's discussion of the background of the image of the black devil shows that the association was not nearly as polarized as it may seem. Origen, Augustine and the *Exodus* poem all show more subtle interpretations of the blackness of Ethiopians. Jasmine Kilburn-Small, 'The Figure of the Ethiopian

Brakke also identifies one attribute which Ælfric has probably omitted in his studious abridgement of the tale: 'the majority of such appearances are associated with the demon of fornication [which] suggests that the stereotype of hypersexuality attaches to the Ethiopian demon'.[285] In Ælfric's source (Gregory's *Dialogues* II.2.1-24) rather than the 'þrostle' of the Ælfrician rendering, Benedict is inflamed by a more explicitly carnal image, a woman of his acquaintance, which Ælfric has transformed into the black thrush. Godden notes 'It is perhaps in the interests of a more heroic picture of the saint that Ælfric does not tell us that Benedict was inflamed by an image of a woman he had once seen, or that he contemplated giving up the ascetic life, almost overcome by desire.'[286] This tempering of the erotic element of the saint's narrative is probably another alteration in accordance with Ælfric's perception of the audience's 'best interests' but in so doing, it disassociates, for Ælfric's audience, the link between the devil and fornication. In the context of Ælfric's homilies it is notable that fornication never appears associated with demons. In fact, the homilies are remarkably quiet on the subject as it appears only in a handful of instances across Ælfric's homiletic canon, and only twice in the two series of *Catholic Homilies*.[287]

A final demonic attribute that Brakke notes as associated with the Ethiopian figure in the monastic literature is a powerful odour. At a very broad interpretation one could point to the 'sweflan lig' ('sulphuric fire', l. 190, *CH* 1.31) but a more appropriate example of the link between the demonic and odour is perhaps one where the devil has used his shape-shifting ability to appear as Jesus to the dying St. Martin, though in this case the adopted form is not that of an Ethiopian. From the tradition as it survives in Ælfric's corpus, it certainly seems to

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in Old English Texts', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester,* 86 (2004), pp. 69-85, pp. 71-74.
    [285] Brakke, 'Ethiopian Demons', p. 516.
    [286] *CH: Introduction*, p. 432.
    [287] Robert DiNapoli, *An Index of Theme and Image to the Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, (Frithgarth, Norfolk: Anglo-Saxon Books, 1995), pp. 36-37. The two instances are once in the *Decollation of John the Baptist* as part of a list of sins taken from Alcuin's *De Virtutibus*, and a second instance in the *Passio Sci Simon et Judae* where it appears as part of a narrative in which apostles prove that the deacon Euphrosynus is not guilty of fornication through a miracle.

be the case that the odour is a function of the demonic that has been mapped onto the Ethiopian rather than the other way round.[288]

The fiery mouth and eyes are arrestingly visual in their descriptions. The mouth especially is reminiscent of the hell-mouths of Anglo-Saxon and later art, appearing in manuscript illustrations and later church paintings. The 'swefan lig' of *Passio Sci Bartholomei* is reminiscent of the 'fissures, vents or chimneys into the earth' identified by Semple in her discussion of the Harley Psalter.[289] A contorted mouth is also later identified as a diagnostic feature of the possessed. When St Martin comes to perform an exorcism on a boy, the boy 'arn him togeanes mid gyniendum muðe' ('ran towards him with gaping mouth', l. 204).[290] Russell notes that the fiery mouth and eyes are portrayed alongside 'spindly arms and legs, bloated torsos, and long, hooked noses; the last was invidiously combined with racial stereotypes to demonize Jews in later medieval art'.[291] It is difficult to discern precisely to which period Russell is referring (though it is clearly post-Anglo-Saxon), but if this was the case as Ælfric perceived it, then it is an opportunity he did not take up.[292] Physical characteristics that associate the devil with Jewish people are not suggested by Ælfric in any of his homilies, though the devil often instigates Jews to take action against Christians. Another potential link to a tradition of the fiery mouth is the passage in which Satan speaks in sparks in

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[288] Similarly, Ælfric preserves such phrases as 'galnysse stencum' ('stench of lust' *CH* 1.7) from the source (Gregory Hom. 10, *PL* 76, 1113A-C at this point, *CH: Introduction*, p. 59) which indicates the circularity of the influences in the tradition. Lust and stench appear separate from the figure of the Ethiopian, yet are attributes of the Ethiopian demon in Brakke's analysis of the early tradition. More generally, Ælfric elswhere offers a multi-sensual description of the need to be vigilant in *CH* 1.11 (taken from Bede Hom. 1.18, 17-20 ibid., p. 71). This is part of a broader smell vocabulary which similarly to the colour vocabulary relies on sensory perception for the quality of the individual (see e.g. *CH* 2.23, ll. 43-62).

[289] Semple, 'Illustrations of Damnation in Late Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts', p. 236. See above Section 2.1.1. See also *CH* 2.21, 'Ic þa beheold þone ormætan lig. þe of þære neowelnysse astah; Se lig wæs mid manna sawlum afylled. and hi asprungon upp mid þam fyre swa swa spearcan. and eft ongean into þære nywelnysse. and þær sloh ut of þære nywelnysse ormæte stenc mid þæm æðmum. se afylde ealle þa þeosterfullan stowe.' ('I then beheld a mighty fire that rose from the abyss. The fire was filled with mens souls, and they sprang up with the fire just as if [they were] sparks, and then again into the abyss, and there came from the abyss an awful stench with the vapours, that filled all that dark-filled place', ll. 38-44).

[290] On possession and exorcism, see below Section 4.2.4.

[291] Russell, *Lucifer*, p. 132.

[292] See above Section 3.4.2.

*Christ and Satan*, a later addition to Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius XI. Of this passage, Hill suggests that

> the Old English poet was aware of the image of breathing fire or sparks as one aspect of the traditional iconography of Satan. But he was also aware of the biblical association of prophetic speech and fire […] we are meant to recognize Satan's fiery speech as both a sign of his tormented bestial condition […] and as an infernal parody of prophetic discourse.[293]

This infernal parody is a stimulating suggestion but represents an ambitious reading in the current context, as in the individual homilies we are not offered a psychologically realised devil, but rather an Iago-like figure of unexplained malice. Perhaps in a conflation of the two images, the devil in the drawings in the Junius manuscript 'remains proudly humanoid […] with flaming hair' while his attendant demons, in the process of the fall become 'little, black, wizened imps with tiny wings and tails'.[294]

It has already been noted that the devil has the ability to change his form, appearing in the forms of a child and of a thrush to Benedict. The association between the devil and certain worldly fauna is used elsewhere, where there is no authorial clarification as to whether it is the case that the devil is present literally or metaphorically through these animal agents. A second instance of an association with birds comes from the *Depositio S Martin Episcopi* (*CH* 2.34), where while near a river and seeing birds diving to catch fish, Martin remarks 'Þas fugelas

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[293] Hill, 'Satan's Fiery Speech: *Christ and Satan* 78-79', p. 4. Hill suggests the *Visio Pauli* as a possible source for this image, which in the current context seems unlikely given Ælfric's repudiation of the veracity of the *Visio Pauli* in the opening of *Item in Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia CH* 2.20 see above, Section 3.3. Keenan suggests that Athanasius' *Life of Saint Anthony* is a more likely source, which again brings us back to the Ethiopian, see above, at n. 284. Keenan, 'Satan Speaks in Sparks: Christ and Satan 78-79a, 161b-162b, and the Life of St. Anthony'.

[294] Russell, *Lucifer*, p. 131. See e.g. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Junius XI, pp. 3, 16, 17. Speaking of the images in the manuscript, Ohlgren states 'the medieval artist was able, under special conditions, to exert his originality in the selection and treatment of pictorial scenes, revealing an aesthetic assimilation of the poem's content and theme.' Thomas H. Ohlgren, 'The Illustrations of the Cædmonian Genesis: Literary Criticism Through Art', *Medievalia et humanistica,* n. s. 3 (1972), pp. 199-212, p. 210. If this is the case, Ælfric certainly does not feel able, or does not feel the need, to exert the same originality in his depictions of Satan, as this analysis has shown. Ælfric is making no effort to assimilate into any other depiction broader characteristics of the tradition.

habbað feonda gelicnysse. ðe gehwilce men unwære beswicað. and grædelice gripað to grimre helle' ('These birds have the likeness of fiends, that deceive some unwary men and greedily grip [and drag] them to hell', ll. 277-79).

Another animal form that Martin uses as a proxy for devilish action is the invisible wolves he expresses his anxiety over to his disciples: 'Soðlice becumað ungesewenlice wulfas to ðinre eowode. and hwa bewerað hi?' ('Truly, invisible wolves have come to our flock, and who restrains them?', ll. 288-90). This reinforces an image Ælfric uses in the first series in *Sermo De Natale Domini* (*CH* 1.2) where the rationale for the angel's annunciation of the birth of the Lord to the shepherds is described in the following terms: 'Þam lareowe gedafenað þæt he symle wacol sy ofer godes eowede. þæt se ungesewenlica wulf godes scep ne tostence' ('to the teacher it is appropriate that he is always watchful over God's flock, such that the invisible wolf may not scatter God's flock', ll. 109-11).[295]

Further associations with creatures include one between the devil and serpents which is established in Genesis and so is a commonplace in the tradition of diabolic representation. Drawing on Genesis, Ælfric confirms this commonplace in *De Initio Creaturæ* (*CH* 1.1).[296] This unremarkable account of the fall of man appears immediately following an Ælfrician discussion of the heretical belief that the devil created some creatures: 'Nu cwædon gedwolmen þæt deofol gesceope sume gesceafta. ac hi leogað; Ne mæg he nane gesceafta gescyppan. for ðan ðe he nis na scyppand. ac is atelic sceocca. ac mid leasunge he wile beswician.' ('Now some heretics say that the devil created some created things, but they lie. He cannot create any created things, because he is no creator, but is a loathsome fiend, but with lies he will deceive', ll. 117-20). Godden notes that Ælfric comments on this belief again in *Octabas et Circumcisio Domini Nostri* (*CH* 1.6, ll. 171-77) where, Godden suggests, the comments 'imply that the belief in diabolic creation was offered, or at least understood, as an explanation for savage and dangerous

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[295] No source has been identified for this passage yet, leaving the possibility that it is Ælfric's invention. It draws freely on Bede's second homily on the nativity, but this element appears to be Ælfric's own. *CH: Introduction*, p. 18. See also *CH* 1.17 on the imagery of the scattered sheep.

[296] Contrary to the portrayal in *De Initio Creaturæ*, in *Annunciatio S. Mariæ CH* 1.13, Ælfric alters his source (in this case Bede) in order to clarify that the devil sends a subordinate devil in the form of a serpent to Eden in the Genesis narrative (ll. 65-73). See ibid., pp. 104-05.

animals'.[297] Serpents also appear with demonic associations in the magicians' efforts to defeat Simon and Jude in *Passio Sanctorum Apostolorum Simonis et Iude* (*CH* 2.33): 'þa drymen ða wurdon geyrsode. and gemacodon ðurh heora scincræft þæt him comon to creopende fela nædrran;' ('Then the wizards were angered and, through their magic, made it such that many serpents came creeping towards them', ll. 118-20).[298] When the serpents are turned back on the wizards 'hi ðotorodon swilce oðre wulfas' ('they [the magicians] howled like other wolves', l. 126). Although not here directly related to the demonic, the demons' proxies are described in the vocabulary of the animals most associated with the devil.

The relationship between the devil and bird, serpent, and wolf is made in *Solomon and Saturn* as noted by Woolf in her early work on the devil in poetry which itself lists many of the tropes of the tradition considered so far.[299] Woolf sought to find links between these representations and the Norse canon, including the Midgard serpent and Fenrir, the wolf that will be released at Ragnarǫk, but there is little doubt that in the current context such links were not at the forefront of Ælfric's mind. Whether audiences identified the comparison is another matter, and may well be a function of the individual performance context. Later manuscripts of Ælfric's works are disseminated as far as York where such interpretations may have been more readily understood by an audience more familiar with Viking traditions.

The invisible wolves of *Depositio St Martini Episcopi* (*CH* 2.34) hint at one other important attribute of the devil's physical presence and that is his ability to hide his appearance entirely. It is also possible for the devil to transform himself into a creature and become invisible simultaneously as with both the invisible wolves above and the invisible dragon disguise in *St Benedicti Abbatis* (*CH* 2.11),

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[297] Ibid., p. 52.

[298] Godden notes 'All Latin versions agree that the apostles filled their own cloaks with the snakes and sent them back to the magi; Ælfric's notion that they found the snakes in the magi's cloaks perhaps reflects an unrecorded reading *invenerunt* for *impleverunt*.' ibid., p. 168.

[299] Woolf, 'The Devil in Old English Poetry', p. 2. The third instance is as dragon, twenty-first likeness is of a poisonous bird, and the twenty-third is in the likeness of a wolf. *The Old English Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn*, ed. by Daniel Anlezark, Anglo-Saxon Texts 7 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2009), pp. 73-74.

where a monk wishes to leave the minster but is forbidden, and eventually is dismissed:

> Hwæt ða se munuc ut gewat. and gemette sona ænne dracan him togeanes standende. mid gynigendum muðe. þæt he hine forswulge; Se munuc ða swiðe befigende. and forhtigende hrymde; Yrnað. yrnað. for ðan ðe þes draca me forswelgan wile; Þa mystermunecas urnon to. and swa ðeah nateshwon þone dracan ne gesawon. for ðan þæt wæs se ungesewenlica deofol […] Þurh benedictes gebundum him wæs se ungesewenlica draca æteowod. ðam ðe he ær filigde. na geseonde; (ll. 381-87, 391-92)

> At that the monk went out and he met a dragon standing opposite, with mouth yawning at the jaws so that he might swallow him. The monk then greatly trembling and fearing cried out: 'Run! Run! Because this dragon would swallow me.' Then the Minster-monks ran to [him] and there they did not see the dragon, because it was the invisible devil […] Through Benedict's prayers was the invisible dragon revealed, which had before followed him without seeing [being seen].

The dragon alludes to the dragon of Revelation 12 and 20, and invisibility is here clarified to be selective in those upon whom it impacts. It is the perception of the individual that the devil has the ability to deceive, taking on the form of the dragon but only making himself visible to the monk in error, until Benedict makes the devil visible to all through prayer. The devils' power appears to be linked to their invisibility and the abstract lesson that clear vision and understanding undo the deceit of devils is implicitly present. Praying to make visible that which is invisible seems to draw on Hebrews 4:13 and 11, but only allusively. More likely, in the audience's mind, this would be understood to teach that prayer is a powerful weapon against the devil, which is attested elsewhere in Ælfric's works.[300]

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[300] See above, Section 3.4.1. This is made explicit in the *Lives of Saints* 13 ll. 50-54 where it is used to shatter the devil's weapons. The Pater Noster prayer of *Solomon and Saturn* also indicates the efficacy of prayer against the devil, even as a weapon itself. The term 'ungesewenlican deofol' is also used by Ælfric to describe the devil's approach to exasperating Job in a later homily (*CH* 2.30, ll. 153-54). The 'ungesewenlice deofol' is shown in contrast in the representation of Antichrist which is referred to as 'se gesewenlice deofol' by Ælfric, see below, Section 5.3.1.

Perhaps the most problematic of the devil's appearances, however, is his disguise as Jesus in *Depositio St Martini Episcopi* (*CH* 2.34):

> Hwilon com se deofol on anre digelnysse mid purpuran gescryd. and mid helme geglengd [sic] to ðam halgan were þær he hine gebæd. and cwæð þæt he wære witodlice se hælend; Þa beseah martinus wið þæs sceoccan leoht. gemyndig on mode. hu se metoda drihten cwæð on his godspelle be his godcundan tocyme. [...] Ða fordwan se deofol dreorig him fram. and seo stow ða stanc mid ormætum stence. æfter andwednysse þæs egeslican gastes. (ll. 229-34, 237-38)

> Once the devil came in a disguise with purple clothes, and with an embellished helm and said that he was truly the Saviour. Martin then saw the fiend's brightness, mindful in his thought how the creator Lord spoke in his gospel of his divine coming. [...] Then the devil sorrowfully went from him, and the place stank with an immense stench after the presence of the horrid spirit.

The purple clothes again refer to the colour vocabulary whereby purple is associated with wealth, opulence and greed, and the embellished helm, presumably a crown of some sort, is the detail that confirms to Martin the deceit of the vision.[301] The stench is part of the image of the devil as discussed above. Ælfric has deviated from his main source, Sulpicius' *Vita*, for some time by this point, using instead Alcuin's *Vita Martini*. This episode marks the point of return to Sulpicius' work, and so represents an active decision node in Ælfric's composition of the homily. The imitation of Christ is possibly the most disturbingly complicated form in which a devil can appear to an audience member as it is the situation in which one assumes they have least chance of being able to discern the truth of the situation using their own skills. This passage is balanced by the first act Martin undertakes that is relayed by the narrative, where he met a blind pauper but had nothing to offer and so cuts his own cloak in half so that he can provide something to the man (ll. 27-44). This heralds his first vision of Christ, who spurs him to his

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[301] Bartholomew is offered purple garments as part of his reward for curing the King Polymius' sick daughter in *Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli*.

baptism. In this context, then, Ælfric is preserving the balance of his source by using the two visions to act against each other, and making the didactic point that Christ, though prince of all creation, is not princely in this world. The devil's ignorance and simplistic application of deceit is shown to Martin by the devil's most cunning act, but this should leave the audience in a state of hyper-vigilance since he can appear in a diverse range of forms.

The adoption of these various worldly forms establishes shape-shifting as one of the devil's skills that makes him most threatening to the unwary. There are many occasions in the narrative homilies where a devil takes a form of disguise in order to deceive, and ultimately to assume power over the soul of an individual. Invariably saints can see through these disguises and frequently operate in order to relieve the suffering of the individual that has taken the devils' interest. Rather than define the devil's appearance in any limited sense, Ælfric's selection of sources and his selective fidelity to them, presents a range of descriptions that overall undermine the supposition that the devil is associated with any particular form. There are symptomatic attributes that can be identified, but none is common to all representations (and therefore no attribute can be considered diagnostic). Action, as much as appearance, is informative to the audience as to the intentions of ambiguous beings in the world. This brings us to consider the range of narrative functions adopted by the devil in the narratives Ælfric relates through his homilies.

4.2 The narrative function of the devil

In Ælfric's selection of sources for his homilies, devils and the devil perform several narrative functions, as the above analysis has indicated (albeit indirectly). One of the major functions is inhabiting idols in order to be worshipped as gods, but devils can also inhabit people, leading to exorcisms which are quite frequent in the narrative homilies. Manifestations of the behaviour of demons can be perceived by proxy through the possessed individuals, and the treatment of the possessed often conforms to a standard procedure for exorcism. In a nuanced interpretation of a similar idea, devotion to demons and the devil can confer powers on individuals without causing them to be possessed, and this is usually in the guise of 'drycræft' (sorcery).

Usually, narratives regarding idolatry and sorcery are confined to the homilies concerning the Apostolic saints. In addition to biblical narratives, stories of the apostles are recorded in (often anonymous) saints' lives alongside those of Patristic Age and subsequent confessors such as Martin and Benedict. There is an implicit elision of the temporal distance between these saints' respective lives through their context in single collections, but by referring to the protagonists as 'the apostle', or to the context of Martin's service in the Roman army, this narrative distance is established in the performance of given narratives. What contribution, then, can these narratives, indeed these homilies, be said to make to contemporary understanding of idolatry, heathenism and, more generally, non-Christian faiths? To modern critics, in many ways these works act as foregrounding for Ælfric's later canon, and Wulfstan's homilies that engage directly with the issue of, especially, Danish heathenism.[302] Ælfric and Ælfric's immediate audience (in the early 990s) could not have known that the socio-political forces acting at the end of the first decade of the eleventh century would have made these discussions so pertinent to their later audiences, so the narratives must necessarily have performed a function in their earlier context. One could plausibly argue that there need be no further impetus to recapitulate these narratives other than an interest

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[302] See above Section 1.1 for a discussion of the debates which foreground Ælfric's treatment of heathenism and idolatry.

in Christian history, but to do so would artificially flatten the vibrancy of the contemporary understanding of non-Christian religious practices and the reflection that this understanding prompted, especially in terms of orthodoxy. Similarly, in some way Ælfric is aiming for comprehensive coverage of the Christian faith in terms of the historical contexts of his homilies, but this is tempered by the necessity to have comprehensive coverage of the church year, so inclusion of any given narrative homily is not necessary for comprehensiveness, but nor is it sufficient to imply a socio-political function.

### 4.2.1   Idols

Idolatry is the central focus of one homily in each of the series of *Catholic Homilies*. In the First Series, the *Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli* (*CH* 1.31) follows the apostle in his travels across India in order to convert the idolaters. Bartholomew's acts are designed to demystify (to an extent) the power of the demons that exist in these liminal spaces, in order to show that their apparent miracles are in fact false. In the Second Series, a similar progression characterises the *Passio Sanctorum Apostolorum Simonis et Iude* (*CH* 2.33) where Simon and Jude act against the false gods in Persia, but here the emphasis is more on the socio-political hysteresis around the religious practices as opposed to the demons' acts themselves, that is, the way in which state, religion and society are intertwined and mutually supportive, which makes changing any one aspect of these three difficult.

*Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli* takes as its narrative an abridgement of the Anonymous *Passio Bartholomaei Apostoli* the central plot of which focuses on the overthrow of the demon Ashtaroth who has established himself as a god in India, in the kingdom of Polymius. Ælfric is close to his source for the majority of the homily, with one significant omission, which is itself a digression on the virginity of Mary.[303] The demon persecutes his followers with diseases and particularly madness and blindness, and relieves their suffering once he has control of their souls, at which point, as he is forced by Bartholomew to explain, 'þonne hi for

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[303] *CH: Introduction*, p. 257.

heora lichaman hælðe us offriað þonne geswice we þæs lichaman gedrecednysse. for þan ðe we habbað syððan heora sawla on urum gedwealde;' ('when they for their bodies' health make offerings to us, then we stop the suffering, for then we have their souls in our power thereafter', ll. 129-31).

For Ælfric this rationale for illness in the world and the seeming efficacy of idols certainly has a resonance with folk healing practices. Having completed the narration of the story of Bartholomew, Ælfric synthesises from scripture and Augustinian exegesis (along with a brief quotation from Gregory) a repudiation of seeking health 'unalyfedum tilungum' or 'awyrigedum galdrum' or 'ænigum wiccecræfte' ('in forbidden practices', 'in cursed enchantments', and 'in any witchcraft', ll. 304-05) in healing, equating such practices to 'deofles cræft' ('devil's craft', l. 310). Ælfric makes this explicit as the lesson he wants the audience to take from the sermon, implying that the existence of folk healing as part of day-to-day life is a reality for Ælfric and his audience, and this is to some extent corroborated by the charm record, though, as described above,[304] the relationship is not straightforward. That this point will be the culmination of the homily is not necessarily obvious from the outset of Ælfric's sermon; for the audience, the narrative is littered with associations that would be made prior to its applicability to their own situation, which would be more likely to occur during the resolution of the narrative.

Bartholomew's decision to force the demon to explain his own deceit to his erstwhile worshippers has powerful effects on the populace in the narrative, but in so doing illustrates to the audience a series of incidental features that describe the demons' limitations when taking action in the world. One important feature is the binding of the demon and his description of his master's binding. The demon Ashtaroth is first described as 'bound' by another demon, Berith, of whom the idolaters have sought an explanation as to their god's silence: 'Eower god is swa fæste mid isenum racenteagum gewriþen þæt he ne gedyrstlæcð. Þæt he furþon orþie oððe sprece. syððan se godes apostol bartholomeus binnon þam temple becom;' ('Your god is bound so fast with iron chains, that he dare not even breathe

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[304] See above, Section 1.0.

or speak, since God's apostle Bartholomew came into the temple', ll. 26-28).
Bartholomew clarifies to the king Polymius that the demon 'þurh godes englum þe
me sende is gehæft' ('is bound by god's angels who sent me', l. 96). When the
demon comes to explain his plight to the king and the people who had worshipped
him, the iron chains have transmuted into 'fyrenum racenteagum fram cristes
englum' ('fiery chains from Christ's angels', l. 117), and later the demon admits 'ic
eom mid byrnendum racenteagum þearle fornumen. 7 for þi ic sprece þe he me
het: elles ic ne dorste on his andweardnysse sprecan ne furþon ure ealdor;' ('I am
severely seized by fiery chains and because of this I say what he commands [of]
me: else I dare not in his presence speak, nor even [would] our prince', ll. 135-37).
Imagery of binding abounds within representations of demons and the devil, in
reference to the tradition that Christ bound Satan in hell during the harrowing.
Indeed this reference is made explicit in the passage from the homily: 'He soðlice
þone deað oferswiðde. 7 urne ealdor mid fyrenum bendum gewrað.' ('Truly He
[Christ] overcame death, and bound our prince with fiery bands', ll. 119-20). The
binding of Satan gives narrative justification for Ashtaroth and the other demons'
presence in the world as his proxies, as the fiery chains have also been applied to
the devil himself:

> Ure ealdor swa gebunden swa he is. sent us to mancynne þæt we hi mid
> mislicum untrumnyssum awyrdon: ærest heora lichaman for þan ðe we
> nabbað nænne anweald on heora sawlum buton hi heora lac us geoffrian (ll.
> 125-28)

> Our prince, bound as he is, sent us to mankind, so that we could destroy
> them with many afflictions: first their bodies because we have no power
> over their souls unless they offer us their gifts.

The hierarchy established in hell is implied by Ashtaroth. In addition to being sent
as proxy for his prince, he characterizes himself and his fellow demons: 'we soðlice
deoflu sind: þæs ealdres gyngran. þe crist þæs mædenes sunu gewrað' ('we are
truly devils, the prince's servants, that Christ, the son of the maiden, bound', ll.
133-34). The hierarchy of demons is a perverse inversion of the hierarchy of

angels, a tradition established by Isidore and elaborated by Gregory.[305] This tradition also finds a home in *Genesis B* where a more psychologically realised Satan offers the dubious reward to any demon that can tempt Adam of sitting next to him in hell.[306]

Upon being banished from the image, the demon Ashtaroth refuses to debark from the idol, and this makes it unbreakable through his supernatural power. This trope also appears in *Passio SS. Apostolorum Simonis et Judae* (*CH* 2.33) where devils inhabiting idols to the sun and moon break the idols when they are forced out of them in the apostles' final act.[307] A variation is to be found in *S. Benedicti, Abbatis* where a stone is rendered immovable 'for ðan ðe se ungesewenlica deofol þæronuppan sæt' ('because the invisible devil sat thereupon', *CH* 2.11, ll. 189-90). The devil sits upon the stone in order to protect (gefriðode) 'an ærene anlicnysse' ('a bronze image', ll. 194-95) which, when it is cast into the kitchen, causes an illusion in the minds of the onlookers: 'færlice ða wearð him eallum geðuht. swilce fyr eode of ðære anlicnysse. swa þæt seo kycene eal forborne. ac hit næs swa him geðuht. ac wæs þæs deofles dydrung' ('suddenly they all thought it happened, that fire came from the image, so that the kitchen all burned, but it was not as they thought, but was the devil's illusion', ll. 196-99).[308] The illusion of fire draws freely on two of the traditions discussed above, the association with fire and the ability to manipulate the perception of men. The illusion is broken by Benedict's prayers and the clarity of his vision is never

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[305] Russell, *Lucifer*, p. 94. Gregory *Homilia in Euangelia*, XXXIV PL76 1246-59. See Fox, 'Ælfric on the Creation and Fall of the Angels', pp. 183-84, especially n. 37; Smetana, 'Ælfric and the Early Medieval Homiliary', p. 190.

[306] 'Sittan læte ic hine wið me sylfne, swa hwa swa þæt secgan cymeð on þas hatan helle', ('I will let him sit with me, whosoever can come to say that in this hot hell'), *Genesis B*, l. 438.

[307] Discussed above, Section 4.1. Ælfric discusses idols to the sun and the moon in *De Passione Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (*CH* 1.24), ll. 37-45, where Ælfric uses a passage from Bede that quotes from the Psalms in order to explain how myth can become religion. The passage is taken from Bede Hom.1.20 CCSL 122 48-52 which quotes from Psalm 113:12-15. Bede's description explains that ancestors raised idols to 'deadum entum' (dead giants l. 37) and explains dedications to the sun, moon and fire, as well as creatures, but describes these idols as gold, silver, dumb, blind, deaf, and without motion or life. This tradition is drawn upon by the wizards Zaroes and Arphaxat when they act as devilish proxies, see below Section 3.2.2.

[308] See also *CH* 2.10, ll. 118-23 for another instance of a devilish illusion of fire, here quelled by Cuthbert and *CH* 1.24, ll. 165-70 where the sorcerer Simon fashions a brazen serpent which he then animates. Simon is explicitly made a type for the devil, being referred to as 'godes wiðersaca' ('God's adversary', l. 176).

undermined by the devil's deceits. This establishes two themes, firstly that illusions will be used in order to deceive any who are less than fully committed to the faith, and secondly that holy men can explain those illusions away.[309] It is difficult to resist the temptation to ascribe to these accounts a motivation of public relations for the reform movement and the clergy as a whole (although the two are only ambiguously supportive of each other as Ælfric and Wulfstan's comments on the clergy indicate).

The demons of *Passio Sanctorum Apostolorum Simonis et Iude* (*CH* 2.33) are altogether more distant in their engagement with their worshippers, with the sole exception of when they are forced into making a prophecy by the apostles. The narrative of this homily draws on the Anonymous *Passio Simonis et Iudae* which Zettel notes does not survive in an early copy, though it does in a twelfth-century derivative.[310] The demons, when forced to prophesy the outcome of the battle at hand, make an unspecific prophecy about the death of many at a great battle, which the apostles think is absurd and make their own prophecy which itself comes true. Demons are suppressed in the remainder of the narrative, and the devil acts only through two human proxies, the wizards Zaroes and Arphaxat, whose actions will be considered in the following section. Attributes of the demons are mapped onto their proxies, but in terms of the demons themselves, what is most common is that in the two episodes that deal directly with the worship of idols, in the opening and closing narratives of the tale, the demons live in the images which have been made to them, and, in the closing narrative, the demons who inhabit the idols of the sun and moon are forced to break when they have been ousted from them by the apostles.[311]

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[309] Fire is also used as a tool of the devil in *CH* 2.30, where the devil sends fire to destroy Job's sheep. In the latter context, fire is also used but the fire is real, though its source is masked by an illusion. 'Þæt fyr com ufan ðe þa scep forbærnde. ac hit ne com na of heofenum þeah ðe hit swa gehiwod wære. for ðan ðe se deofol næs on heofenum næfre siððan he ðanon þurh modignysse afeol' ('The fire that burned the sheep came from above, but it did not come from heaven, though it was made to look thus, because the devil was never in heaven after he fell from there through pride', ll. 91-93).
[310] See *CH: Introduction*, pp. 613-14.
[311] In the form of black Ethiopians, as discussed above, Section 4.1.

One further episode of particular interest with regard to idolatry occurs in *Depositio St Martini Episcopi* (*CH* 2.34), where Martin seeks the identity of the saint to which a shrine has been established in a holy place near the city. When the priests cannot name the saint, Martin prays to God to find the identity of the person to whom the shrine has been dedicated, which invokes the spirit of the man, not a saint, but an executed thief. Here the spirit is an 'atelic sceadu on sweartum hiwe' ('horrible shade in black form', l. 141) and is not explicitly associated with a demon. Martin destroys the shrine and is forced to take similar action towards a shrine in the form of 'ænne heahne pinbeam' ('a high pine-tree', l. 162), and is lauded for his frequent destruction of the pre-existing architecture of religious observance later in the homily: 'Gelome he towearp gehwær hæðengyld' ('He would frequently destroy pagan shrines in many places', ll. 183-84).

The discussions of idolatry to be found in these homilies are distanced from the audience by concerning apostolic saints, necessarily situating the narrative around 900 years prior to their earliest performance contexts in most cases. Grundy notes that Ælfric 'distinguishes two kinds of idolatry or devil worship: one is literal, the other metaphorical'.[312] The literal idolatry is devil worship through ignorance. Following his sources, Ælfric presents the heathens as unknowing, naïve, and as they gain knowledge through the words of the apostles, the mystery surrounding the false gods is dispelled, as is these 'gods'' power. The exception to the narrative distance is the presentation to be found in *Depositio St Martini Episcopi* (*CH* 2.34), but the solution is the same. Through learning and the intercession of the holy man the ambiguity through which the false shrine holds its power is removed. The idea of demolishing a pre-existing religious architecture of a religion that has lost its popular appeal must have had some resonance in the late tenth century. Ælfric's discussion of folk practices in the coda to *Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli* (*CH* 1.31) indicates that he believes the analogues to the 'heahne pinbeam' to be found in the landscape of tenth-century England to be equally dangerous to the spiritual health of the community to whom he preaches. Though already marginalised in textual culture, and appearing only sporadically in

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[312] Grundy, *Books and Grace: Ælfric's Theology*, p. 11.

the charms, the threat of apostasy remains an anxiety for Ælfric and one that he addresses by selecting these narratives exhorting the audience to reject any insidious hold a prior religion may have on their lives.

The metaphorical devil worship of Grundy's hypothesis refers to the apathy of the individual. The moral atmosphere of Ælfric's texts makes the case that through failing to align oneself with God, one is implicitly aligning oneself with the devil, as has been made clear in *Feria III: De Dominica Oratione* (*CH* 1.19).[313] This is also referred to in those comments that form the coda to to *Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli* (*CH* 1.31), but here it is in a more simplistic way. Ælfric is determined to lay responsibility for poor learning at the door of the individual, and ignorance through apathy is not to be excused.

### 4.2.2   Sorcerers

The wizards Zaroes and Arphaxat adopt devilish attributes during the narrative of *Passio Sanctorum Apostolorum Simonis et Iude* (*CH* 2.33). The king Xerxes establishes a contest between the wizards and the apostles after their actions at the battle, in which the wizards torment the 'unbesorge men' ('unconcerned men', l .76).[314] The trials that the wizards put the men through are all trials of deprivation, depriving them firstly of speech, then mobility, then sight. These tactics are similar to those used by the demons in *Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli* (*CH* 1.31), who deprive people of health in order to gain worshippers through curing them, though in that case the agency is less clearly attributable without the insight of the holy men – here, however, the stimulus is entirely malicious and worship is intended to be explicitly motivated by fear. The apostles pray in order to undo the negative effects of the wizards' actions and clarify the way in which suffering was brought about: 'se deofol eow tawode þurh his drymen swa swa he wolde. for ðan ðe he ungebletsode wæron;' ('the devil reduced you through his wizards just as he willed, because you were unblessed.', ll. 97-99). The didactic message is clear: devils are agents of deprivation as much as of depravity,

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[313] See above, Section 3.4.1.

[314] 'Unbesorge' is unique in the corpus, though 'besorg' is often rendered 'precious to God', see *CH: Introduction*, p. 617.

whereas the Christian faith centres on a giving God, and a freeing God. The method by which the wizards ultimately bring about the martyring of the apostles is similarly through a mechanism of deprivation, in this case, through deprivation of information about the truth of the function of the apostles. The wizards misrepresent the apostles to the inhabitants of the city in which they have sought refuge and cause the citizens to kill the apostles without trial or chance to defend themselves.

Devilish proxies come elsewhere in the form of two more 'dry' in the homilies *De Passione Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (*CH* 1.24) in the First Series where the principal agent is Simon Magus, and *Natale Sci Iacobi Apostoli* (*CH* 2.27) in the Second Series where the agent is Hermogenes. *De Passione Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* relays a sorcerer narrative during the apostles' passion, which occurs in the second section of the homily, indicated by a subheading in capitals in the manuscripts. As with Zaroes and Arphaxat in *Passio Sanctorum Apostolorum Simonis et Iude*, the sorcerer Simon adopts devilish attributes, but here is explicitly stated (by Peter) to be the 'deofol on menniscere edwiste' ('devil in man-like form', l. 177).[315] He is also referred to in vocabulary usually reserved for the devil, as 'godes wiðersaca', though here the association is qualified as he is 'mid ðam awyrgeum gaste [...] afylled' ('filled with the spirit of the devil', l. 107) which makes him 'gebyld þurh deofles gast' ('emboldened by the devil's spirit', l. 113).[316]

Peter's diagnosis is borne out by Simon's acts. Simon associates with dogs, using one to attack Peter after having been humiliated (ll. 135-46). Peter turns the dog on Simon causing it to attack only his clothes while chasing him along the walls of the city 'þeowtende swa swa wulf on þa folces gesihðe' ('howling like a wolf in the sight of the people', l. 144). Later when embarrassed again by Peter in front of the emperor Nero, Simon resorts to summoning dogs, to which Peter ripostes 'Symon me mid his englum geþiwde. nu sende he hundas to me. for þan þe

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[315] This is a form of reference used to identify a typological link with Antichrist, see below, Chapter 5.

[316] This vocabulary is extended to Nero in the homily, but is usually only used with reference to the devil and types for the devil, see the poems of the Junius manuscript where 'godes andsaca' is used for Satan himself in *Genesis* l. 442, for Pharaoh in *Exodus* l. 14, and Nebuchadnezzar in *Daniel* l. 662 (Similarly in *Christ* l. 661, and throughout *Solomon and Saturn*).

he næfð godcundlice englas. ac hæfð hundlice.' ('Simon threatened me with his angels, now he sends dogs to me, because he does not have god-like angels, but has dog-like [ones]', ll. 193-95). Peter's taxonomy of supernatural beings accords with the traditions described above.[317]

Simon's abilities also extend to shape-shifting, taking on the forms often adopted by the devil. During a contest orchestrated by Nero, 'Symon bræd his hiw ætforan þam casere swa þæt he wearð færlice geþuht cnapa. 7 eft harwenge: hwiltidum on wimmannes hade. 7 eft þærrihtte on cnihthade;' ('Simon changed his form before the emperor such that he was fairly seeming a child, and afterwards a hoary man, sometimes in a woman's form and then immediately in a child's form', ll. 172-74). The woman-form is not elsewhere adopted in the homilies, but perhaps refers to a tradition similar to that of the hypersexualization of the Ethiopian figure above, or more likely is referring to the broader shape-shifting tradition of these type of contests.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of Simon's adoption of the devilish modes is that of his introduction: 'Ðes dry wæs mid þam awyriedum gaste to þam swiðe afylled þæt he cwæð þæt he wære crist godes sunu 7 mid his drycræfte þæs folces geleafan amyrde;' ('This sorcerer was filled with the cursed spirit to such an extent that he said that he was Christ, God's son, and with his sorcery corrupted the belief of the people', ll. 107-09).[318] His imitation of Christ goes beyond the simple claim, however and his acts extend to animating a dead corpse (though Peter shows this to be a trick and in fact quickens the corpse through prayer, ll. 110-15), and trying to ascend to heaven, which Peter shows to be effected by being carried by two demons, whom Peter forces to drop Simon, causing his death (ll. 226-49).

It is not only the powers of the demons that their devotees adopt, however. Zaroes, Arphaxat and Simon are all empowered by the demonic association, whereas in *Natale Sci Iacobi Apostoli* (*CH* 2.27) Hermogenes is forced to mimic the demons in their subjugation. Hermogenes sends his apprentice Philetus to

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[317] See above, Section 4.1.

[318] See discussion of Simon as type for Antichrist, below, Chapter 5.

undermine James with argument, but Philetus instead returns converted. Hermogenes binds Philetus 'swa þæt he hine bewendan ne mihte' ('so that he was unable to depart, l. 30). The binding is reversed by James, and Hermogenes is obliged to send his devils to bring James to him bound. The devils are unable to perform this act and their plaint draws on the binding and fire imagery discussed above:

> Ða deoflu ða becomon to ðam apostole. þær he on his gebedum stod. and ongunnon hryman up on ðære lyfte þus cwæðende; Eala ðu iacob godes apostol gemyltsa us. for ðan ðe we nu efne byrnað ær ðan ðe se tima come ure ontendnysse; Se apostol him cwæð to; Hwi come ge to me? Ða deoflu andwyrdon; Hermogenes us asende. and het us lædan him to. ðe and philetum. ac godes engel us gewrað mid fyrenum racenteagum swa hraðe swa we hider comon. and we nu cwylmiað; (ll. 43-51)

> Then the devils came to the apostle, who stood there in prayer, and began to cry up to the sky, thus saying: 'Oh James, God's apostle, have mercy on us, for we are even now burning before the time has come for our burning-trial.' The apostle said to them 'Why have you come to me?' The devils answered: 'Hermogenes sent us and commands us to lead you to him, you and Philetus, but God's angel chained us with fiery chains as soon as we came here, and now we suffer.'

The devils' plaint draws on stock images, coming on the apostle at his prayers, the fiery chains discussed above, the plaintive vocabulary (especially 'hryman up on ðære lyfte' and 'cwylmiað', variants of which are frequently found in such passages), and rhetorical features, such as beginning the plaint with 'Eala'.[319] Here, however, there is a separation between the physical reality perceived by the human protagonists in the piece and the reality perceived by the devils, which includes fiery chains and God's angel, that the audience and human protagonists only gain knowledge of through the devils' reported speech. The line between the figurative and the literal has again become permeable as the metaphorical binding

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[319] On hrym, hream, see *CH* 1.21, l. 143. The vision of Chrysaurius in *CH* 1.28, ll. 196-218, *CH* 1.31 ll. 50, 113, etc.

of servitude and the distribution of agency in the narrative is an inversion of the physical reality of the narrative. By being physically bound by Hermogenes, Philetus is freed from service to the devil and James can both literally and figuratively unbind Philetus to allow him into Christ's service; being figuratively bound in servitude to Hermogenes causes the devils to be physically bound by the angel and forced into the figurative bondage to the service of James; the devils return to Hermogenes to physically bind their master and bring him to the apostle, in order to gain freedom from the pain inflicted by the physical binding to which the angel has subjected them, which exists only figuratively in the physical world.

### 4.2.3    Devils in the spiritual realm and the role of accuser

The role of the accuser is taken by the devil in two narratives: *In Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia* (*CH* 2.20) and *Dominica I in Mense Septembri. Quando Legitur Iob* (*CH* 2.30). The latter homily presents many questions to the modern critic of Ælfric's method, sources, and intentions for the collection of homilies, as though Ælfric states at the outset that this time is 'quando legitur Iob' ('when Job is read', l. ii), Godden notes that this is a monastic tradition and is not replicated in mass which the laity attended.[320] If this is strictly the case, then we must question the extent to which this homily was accessible in a lay context. That said, the exposition of the narrative that Ælfric offers is made more accessible than other analyses of Job, offered by Gregory, Jerome and others. Why, then, does this homily appear in a context which other parts of the collection imply is more universal than monastic and clerical offices? Ælfric's coda specifically identifies the laity as his intended audience ('eow læwedum mannum is ðeos genoh. ðeah ðe he ða deopan digelnysse ðæron ne cunnon', 'for you laymen, this is enough, though you do not know the deeper meaning', ll. 229-31). Ælfric's comments are made even more interesting by the apologetic opening of this coda, intended to ameliorate the worries of 'gelæred men' ('learned men', l. 227) who may view the narrative as a simplification of the story of Job. It seems apparent, then, that this homily is aimed at a mixed audience of lay and monastics or ecclestiastics and, therefore, the

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[320] *CH: Introduction*, p. 593. See also Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 203, n. 53.

logical implication is that Ælfric thought this monastic practice merited extension to the laity.[321]

The devil in the homily provides the means by which Job's faith is tested, though the nature of the test is confused in the narrative by Ælfric's free and sometimes awkward manipulation of the materials he used in the homily. The premise appears to be that God allowed Job to suffer so that he could be an example to later men, but this is sometimes conflated with ideas of undefined sins.[322] Unusually, the devil is specifically named as Satan in the homily, and when he appears in the opening section, Ælfric deploys Gregory in order to explain 'Swa stod se deofol on godes gesihðe. swa swa deð se blinda on sunnan;' (The devil stood in God's sight just as the blind man does in the sun.', ll. 26-27). The devil is deprived of the sight of God and is referred to as 'eower wiðerwinna' ('Your adversary', l. 35). Ælfric ascribes the devil's motivations to a desire to effect a second fall of man, taking an exemplary man and seducing him from God (ll. 52-55). Satan's limitation in view of his fallen nature mimics the deprivation that the devils inflict on men in order to create the illusion of power over them.

Illusion also informs Ælfric's description of the fire that the devil sends which is innovatory, Godden suggests that Ælfric is at pains to deny that the fire which destroys Job's sheep comes from God (lines 90-97).[323] The description Ælfric offers, that it is an illusion of the devil to make the fire appear as if from God, is extended into a warning that these are also the methods of Antichrist, an unusual character in the Ælfrician corpus, but here used to make the message of the homily more obviously relevant to the audience, comprising laymen and learned men alike.[324] By referring to the devil specifically as Satan, and then associating these actions with Antichrist, Ælfric forces a strict chronology on the nature of the threats. Satan is the first instigator of sin and as he is distinguished

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[321] One is reminded of Thacker's comments regarding the pastoral role of monastic communities, see above, Sections 2.1.2 and 2.3.

[322] These sins are simultaneously refuted by the authorial voice when suggested to Job by the other characters.

[323] *CH: Introduction*, pp. 6-7 and 597. This is concept to which Ælfric returns when he comes to write *Preface*.

[324] See below, Chapter 5, especially Section 5.3.1.

here from the more general devils, Ælfric's narrative situates this effort to create a second fall of man within its temporal context, very early for Ælfric's audience, and linked to the first sinner, Satan. Antichrist, on the other hand, is an agent whose actions are necessarily set in the future: as an agent of the apocalypse his actions are confined to the very end of human history. This temporal perspective, enforced by Ælfric on his material, requires his audience to look back to the inception of sin and forward to its implications simultaneously, a method which Wulfstan would later use in his eschatological homilies.[325]

In this homily the devil occupies a space that is beyond the worldly realm; though he is certainly not in heaven, and clearly not in hell, he only manifests himself through action and then invisibly in the temporal realm. He is in God's presence, but cannot see God, and can communicate with Him, in order to offer the challenge to Job's faith, but in Ælfric's rationale would not be allowed to succeed in tempting Job, whether he is capable of it or not. This spiritual space is abstracted from the physical reality in which Job operates, and is the realm in which agencies beyond human control dictate the choices faced by Job but not his reaction to them. Agency is therefore split firmly between Satan's ability to affect the physical realm and his ability to affect the individual at the centre of the narrative.

In contrast to the ill-defined space in *Dominica I in Mense Septembri. Quando Legitur Iob*, in the *Visio Fursei*, rendered by Ælfric in his homily *In Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia* (*CH* 2.20), Fursey's vision takes place in a pseudo-purgatorial space that is certainly not the physical world, nor heaven nor hell. Godden suggests that Fursey's vision has been selected to counter the penchant for reading eschatological sermons at Rogationtide, building on Ælfric's rejection of the *Visio Pauli* with which he opens this sermon. Godden notes that the homily's eschatology 'is in fact very unspecific',[326] though the narrative certainly alludes to attributes that sit within the tradition for representing, variously, the landscape of hell, the function of demons and angels, and a rationale for purgation after death and before entry to heaven.

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[325] See below, Sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.3.
[326] *CH: Introduction*, p. 529.

The demons of Fursey's vision appear to him 'on atelicum hiwe' ('in horrible form', l. 60) and battle the angels, who have been described in his first vision, the night before, as having 'hwitum fyðerhaman' ('white wings', l. 28), 'beorhtnysse scinende' ('shining with brightness', l. 30), 'and ðære sawle wunderlice wynsumnysse mid heora fiðera swege on belæddon, and mid heora sanges dreame micclum gegladodon.' ('and conveyed to the soul wonderous joyousness with the sound of their feathered wings, and with their song's music, greatly gladdened it.', ll. 31-33). There is no elaboration of the devils' form, but they are set in opposition to the beauty of the angels.

The battle causes such a din ('hream', l. 72) that Fursey believes it must be heard across the whole world. The space, however, is not physically situated in the world and so Fursey's view is unsympathetic with his own reality. This strict reading is ameliorated by the phrasing of the vision, in that Fursey is commanded by the angel to look at 'middanearde' ('the world', ll. 93-94). The implication is that the view of the spiritual world that Fursey can perceive in the vision is a reflection of the material, physical world, which his body inhabits. The vision-world acts as a metaphorical space in which the demons can physically battle the angels while conducting the contest for Fursey's soul through rhetorical posturing. Though the horrible form of the demons is not elaborated, the description of the landscape they inhabit indicates that it is similar to the manuscript depictions of hell with burning pits, it is a 'ðeostorful dene, swiðe niðerlic' ('a valley full of darkness, very deep', ll. 94-95) and contains 'feower ormæte fyr' ('four great fires', l. 95) of which an angel asserts 'ontendað ealne middaneard, and onælað þære manna sawla þe heora fulluhtes andetnysse and behat ðurh forgægednysse awægdon' ('will consume all the world, and burn the souls of men who have made void the confession and promise of their baptism through neglect', ll. 96-98). These four fires each conduct a function of purgation of specific sins, and the fire is associated with the souls that burn therein, as in the case where the soul of a sinner is flung at Fursey by the devils, which leaves its mark on him after he awakes from his vision. This is a literal manifestation of a spiritual, metaphorical wound, and accords with the evidence of medical rationales which associate external manifestation with internal discord, in this case sin. One more esoteric element of the devils'

intercession with Fursey is their use of 'deofollican flan' ('devilish darts', l. 63) which appears as an abstract, figurative description of the sense of loss felt by the men St John advised to distribute their wealth to the poor after doing so, but is again associated with the medical tradition, especially that of elf-shot.[327]

The distinguishing feature of the devils in the vision, however, is the sense of entitlement they feel towards Fursey's soul. The function of the devils is defined by their epithets, especially 'se ealda wregere' ('the old accuser', ll. 77, 146) and 'wiðerwinnan' ('adversaries', l. 154). Their accusations are designed to undermine the hold on the soul enjoyed by the angels, and their criticisms are of the rights of the angels to the soul. The devils quote freely from scripture in order to demonstrate that the soul is rightfully theirs, but the angels defend their claim in the strongest terms and in a similar vein.[328]

### 4.2.4   Possession and exorcism

Possession is a common trope in the homilies but is rarely realised in a manner such that the audience could consider it a representation of contemporary possession. The contemporaneity of the practice of exorcism, and therefore the reality of possession as a societal concern, is established by the incidence of formulas for exorcism as part of the baptismal rite and within pontificals, thus, they are provided frequently in collections containing other occasional texts that a preacher might have call for in situ.[329]

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[327] *CH* 1.4, ll. 75-80. On the devil's darts see Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, pp. 33-34. Dendle's analysis is perhaps over-simplistic in that it assumes no conception of metaphor or the figurative as the current analysis allows, rather seeking to reconcile dramatic irregularities. Dendle does, however, note that this is a 'common Christian trope' and is analogous to 'elf-shot'. Ælfric surely knew this analogue but it is not in his interests to emphasize it in the current context, so it should come as no surprise that he does not intercede here. For the way in which this becomes conflated with, and draws on the tradition of Elf-shot, see below, Section 4.2.4 and Jolly, *Popular Religion*, pp. 132-38.
[328] There is a free paraphrase of Romans 1.32 at ll. 66-70, ll. 77-79 of Mark 11.26 and/or Matthew 18.35, ll. 83-85 of Matthew 18.3, and so on. See *CH: Introduction*, 530-38 and *Fontes*.
[329] See e.g. Wilcox, 'Junius 85 and 86 in the Field', especially pp. 359-62. That it is a common trope in literature in England prior to Ælfric's use of it in his homilies is evidenced by Bede's description of Eadbald as 'afflicted by frequent fits of madness and possessed by an unclean spirit', *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, II.5, pp. 150-51. See also the discussion of the use of exorcism in the baptismal rite to be used in the field in Gittos, 'Liturgy of Parish Churches', pp. 70-75, especially 71, and above, Section 2.2. Exorcism rites *per se* are not frequently

On the subject of contemporaneity, Raiswell and Dendle note that due to the paucity of evidence 'it is difficult to reconstruct the precise nature and extent to which *demon possession*, understood as the physical possession of a person, was a diagnosis deployed among the Anglo-Saxons.'[330] From their investigation, however, it seems that reported cases of possession situated both geographically and temporally in Anglo-Saxon England are few in number,[331] but this paucity of evidence must be considered in the context of the preserved charm remedies directed at exorcising demons and especially through some form of purgation.[332] Exorcism, then, may have been relied on more informally that the conditions of textual survival allow.

As far as the homilies are concerned, it is a commonplace that exorcisms will be referred to as the act of a saint: St Bartholomew deals with the demon possessing a man (*CH* 1.31, ll. 50-55) with very short shrift; St James is introduced as being an exorcist by Philetus when he describes to his master Hermogenes 'Soðlice ic geseah þæt he on cristes naman deoflu adræfde of wodum mannum' ('Truly I saw that he, in the name of Christ, drove devils from mad men', ll. 17-18). Similarly Simon and Jude are described as having 'deoflu fram witt-seocum mannum afligdon' ('driven devils from wit-sick men', l. 156). These apostolic exorcisms are performed without recourse to physical acts, but are usually simply referred to as one of their many skills, as in the quotations above.

St Benedict is also successful against the devil possessing a priest, driving the devil from him through prayer and prescribing him to abstain from his position as priest as long as he lives, but the priest cannot keep to this direction and is eventually retaken by the devil (*CH* 2.11, ll. 262-73). The use of prayer is Ælfric's usual recourse, especially in the case of confessor saints, and enjoys a

found in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, Gneuss identifies two: CCCC 391, which is a mid-eleventh-century Worcester text, small in proportion but probably too thick for easy portability in its current form, and BL MS Royal 2 A.xx, a late-eighth-century manuscript with OE additions in the early-tenth century, with a probable Mercian origin. Gneuss, *Handlist* items 104 and 450 respectively; and Ker, *Catalogue*, items 67 and 248 respectively.

[330] Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle, 'Demon Possession in Anglo-Saxon and Early Modern England: Continuity and Evolution in Social Context', *The Journal of British Studies,* 47 (2012), pp. 738-67, p. 742. Their emphasis.

[331] Ibid., pp. 743-45, especially table at 744.

[332] Jolly, *Popular Religion*, especially pp. 108-16.

similarly universal application in the charms for contemporary remedies to illnesses which are perceived as being caused by an inhabiting demon (or elf). Benedict also exorcises a demon from a monk that is drawing water from a well: Benedict strikes the monk on the chin but the effect is felt by the possessing demon who immediately leaves the monk (ll. 434-42). St Martin also performs exorcisms, first by placing his hands on a man who had become 'awed' ('mad', l. 200), by placing his hand on the mouth of a possessed man and thus forcing the demon out through the man's genitals (ll. 204-11). The placing of hands on the possessed is usually the method of exorcism as exercised by the saints with which Ælfric is concerned. This type of method is usually combined with the prescription of purgatives and dramatic (usually overtly Christian) ritual in relieving the suffering of the possessed individual in the charm record. Jolly states that

> The application of Christian ritual to daily problems such as illness points to the local priest as a logical agent of change in traditional medicine because he had authority and power. One of the greatest popular needs was for remedies to fight malign forces that cause illness, especially those evils of ancient Germanic tradition. Against these the Christian liturgy was a logical and powerful tool.[333]

Jolly's argument situates the priests of late Anglo-Saxon England as being central to the medical practices that were performed in local communities. The extent to which access to the charms upon which Jolly bases her argument was available to these priests is unclear, but the breadth of the spread of the tradition in the manuscript record is indicative of the genre's ubiquity, even if specific texts are more limited in their attested reach.

In terms of the physical manifestation of the devil, however, both the narratives drawn from the homilies and the practices described in the charms indicate that contact with the holy, or with items of holy origin, such as holy water or the lichen from crosses in the case of the charms, and contact through the hands of St Benedict, is physically painful to the demons and they are forced to exit the

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[333] Ibid., p. 115.

one they persecute through the most direct route away from that pain.  Just as Satan is unable to bear the sight of God at the opening of *Dominica I in Mense Septembri. Quando Legitur Iob* (*CH* 2.30), so the demons are unable to bear contact from the saints when they are occupying a proxy, either possessing an individual as here, or an object as with the idols described above.

4.3 Conclusions

The analysis above has shown that the representation of the devil in the *Catholic Homilies* is both self-referential and inconsistent across texts (though usually consistent within any given text). The devils' skills are identified as exploiting ambiguities: uncontextualized scripture, alternative physical manifestations, deprivation of information, and the manipulation of the senses. Ælfric's remedies to all of these deceits involve reliance on faith rather than perception.

The line between the figurative and the literal is transgressed on an almost continual basis in the narrative homilies where demons are concerned. Metaphor relies on ambiguity of form and/or function for its efficacy, as do the demons themselves and the narratives are constructed such that exemplary figures negotiate these ambiguities publicly in order to instruct the audience. In the case of *In Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia* (*CH* 2.20), Fursey's sins manifest themselves physically after the spiritual wound inflicted by the demons in his vision of the spiritual realm, and this is perhaps the most fully elucidated version of this trope that appears in the homilies. The demons are characterised by deception and half-truths, adapting to their limitations in order to disguise them. This requires them to be masters of ambiguity when affecting humans, and their defeat is usually not physical but rather comprises the elucidation of their deceit by a holy figure. Their power is linked to their ability to maintain ambiguities.

The presentation of the demonic as reliant on ambiguity has particular resonance in the context of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*. The stated aim of the project is to provide a clear exposition of complicated material to a wider, and ill-educated audience. Ælfric's remedy to the wiles of the demons is frequently faith and right doctrine, and so the *Catholic Homilies*, for Ælfric, are a quasi-devotional act in and of themselves. By presenting God as truth and plain speech, Ælfric's act in writing the homilies (for a wide audience) in and of itself presents an effort to thwart the devil by undermining the basis upon which the devil deceives mankind. Therein lies an irony, however. Ælfric's stated aim is to elucidate for the masses the mysteries of the texts that they are surrounded by, but his didactic purpose, as

evinced by the morality of the homilies, is that ambiguity abounds in the world and where one finds it one finds also the devil. The threat of Ælfric's devils is contained in his inability to define them, and if they were truly explicable they would have no power over the souls of men. Ælfric, as much as the devils, requires them to remain ambiguous, precisely because he requires them to have a threat-function in order to affect the behaviour of his audience.

Devils have the power to manipulate their own image, but this is not an unlimited freedom. When manifest physically, the form which devils adopt often retain some vestige of their inherent nature, for example the colour vocabulary as with the 'blac þrostl' of *S. Benedicti, Abbatis* (*CH* 2.11), and the odour of the devil when he comes disguised as Jesus in *Depositio St Martini Episcopi* (*CH* 2.34). Despite this, no attribute is necessary to the demon and so no individual feature can be considered diagnostic. The idea of sin being made manifest is most vividly portrayed in the homily *Item in Letania Maiore. Feria Tertia* (*CH* 2.20) described above. The burn Fursey suffers is visible on his body after he requickens and stays with him for the remainder of his life. The one sin that the demons could irrefutably attach to Fursey is made visible to all and so has transgressed the boundary between the abstract (the sin) and the physical (its manifestation as a burn). In like manner, the demons frequently retain some attribute that indicates their nature when manifest in the world.

The devil also frequently acts through proxies, men who devote themselves to the worship of devils who occupy images, or those who appear to have some kind of arrangement with devils for them to augment the man's powers in order to give him greater command of other men. The most fearsome proxy, Antichrist, the devil's own son, is used only rarely in the *Catholic Homilies*. This character and his association with the devil is explained in Ælfric's *Preface* but is mentioned only in formulaic phrases in the main body of the homilies themselves. Antichrist, however, is an important agent in the Anglo-Saxon imagination, and Archbishop Wulfstan's works, which are composed only shortly after the *Catholic Homilies*, use this character in place of the devil. It would be an over simplification, however, to suggest that where Ælfric uses the devil, Wulfstan uses Antichrist, and both

authors' engagement with the characters changes over their careers. It is this aspect that will be considered in the next chapter.

5.0 Antichrist

There is significant overlap between the Antichrist tradition and that of the devil. The distinction between the two is that Antichrist's actions are necessarily confined to the future. All devils remain relevant to an individual audience member because of the unspecifc future threat that they present. The particular attributes of Antichrist are associated with the inevitable apocalypse, and as such there is no lottery in the attentions of Antichrist as there is of devils, but rather it is an inevitable threat that awaits all audience members. Antichrist, as a future threat, offers a clear and specific motivation for taking action to correct one's ways here and now and so it is understandable that Antichrist offered a useful didactic tool for the homilists.

Emmerson, in his study of the Antichrist tradition, explains that it 'developed largely because exegetes associated many of the "opponents" of God described in the Old and New Testaments with Antichrist'.[334] These opponents could take the form of symbols, such as Leviathan or Behemoth found in the Book of Job, or could take the form of a specific figure. Antichrist is an eschatological agent, so it was in Revelation that authors found material that 'provided the most fertile ground for exegetes searching for symbols of Antichrist' including, in the most developed exegeses, an anti-trinity, comprising Satan (the Dragon) as God the Father, Antichrist (the Seven-Headed Beast) as God the son, and the two-horned beast or false prophet as the inversion of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of evil.[335]

In the late-tenth century apocalyptic expectations ran high, though modern commentators have found no convincing link to the millenarianism that informs some such positions.[336] Rather, it seems that the events of the times were

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[334] Richard Kenneth Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), p. 21.
[335] Ibid., pp. 22-24, quotation at p. 22.
[336] 'Although millenarian concerns are apparent in Wulfstan's early work, his reformist zeal is clearly there, too, in the exhortations and warnings that flavor these sermons. Not long after the year 1000, he finds a cause for the signs he had interpreted as precursors of the Judgement, and while his understanding of the problem deepens and broadens, he channels his energies toward saving the nation rather than preaching the imminence of Doomsday.' Mary P. Richards, 'Wulfstan

sufficient to indicate the coming of Antichrist, independent of any measure of time. In what follows I will consider firstly the eschatology upon which the homilists were drawing, and to which they were reacting in the late tenth century. As eschatology generally, and Antichrist in particular, is most fully developed by Wulfstan, it is necessary to understand something of how Wulfstan and Ælfric understood each other's presence in the reform milieu, as simply mapping Ælfric's method onto Wulfstan's is unsatisfactory. Wulfstan's approach to his material, to his texts, and to his audiences, each provide a point of comparison to Ælfric's, so understanding the different forces behind their homilies is necessary to understand their impact on late Anglo-Saxon England and in the wider context of textual culture at the time. The representation of Antichrist to be found in each author's works is then considered and, as with Chapter Three above, their re-engagement and manipulation of their own, and others', material is analyzed to discern what the effect of their representations of Antichrist were likely to have been on an audience, and how this informed them of the devil and his function.

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and the Millennium', in *The Year 1000: Religious and Social Response to the Turning of the First Millennium,* ed. by Michael Frassetto (New York and Basingstoke, Hants: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 41-48, at p. 46. 'From Patristic times [...] through the later centuries [...] and including, finally, those who lived through the crucial year 1000 (Ælfric, Wulfstan), orthodox theologians constantly upheld the teachings of the Council of Ephesus (431), i.e. that the Apocalypse was to be interpreted spiritually and not literally. Such a refusal of millenarianism did not, however, prevent some of the most doctrinally correct from believing that they were indeed living the Last Days.' Leo Carruthers, 'Apocalypse Now: Preaching and Prophecy in Anglo-Saxon England', *Études Anglaises,* 51 (1998), pp. 399-410, at p. 408.

5.1 Antichrist and eschatology prior to Ælfric and Wulfstan

Antichrist in the late Patristic and early medieval eras was the locus of a tension between the conceptions which presented the figure as the arch-fiend, a single nemesis of Christ in the last days of this world, when he will ravage for forty-two months as described in Revelation 11.2, and an internal, moralizing interpretation that held sway in the west of Europe from the twelfth century onwards.[337] A related binary can be described between traditions in which Antichrist is a specific demonic figure, usually the devil's son, and those in which Antichrists are people who become Antichrists by their improper devotion to evil, and their foolishness in being deceived by the devil's tricks. In most traditions, these two binaries are elided continually, as with the figurative and literal uses of the devil described at the end of the last chapter. Antichrist is not limited to either role, but adopts both fluidly as needed by the author. As Gatch notes, '[t]he mind of the early medieval theologian was not plagued as is ours with the *bête noire* of consistency.'[338] In the context of Antichrist, a figure whose actions are all necessarily set in the future, the inconsistency inherent in a homilist's ability to move between the literal and the figurative offers an opportunity. Figurative readings offer more interpretative scope for describing practices that are observable around both preacher and audience, whereas literal readings may offer a salve to the audience who need not take the more abstract meaning, applying the narratives to their experience in a very basic way.  The result of such a basic reading is that the audience hearing the homily have no impetus to take personal action to amend their ways. It is this function, as motivator and reason for exhortation that homilists tend to employ eschatological material.[339]

In his discussion of the eschatology of the two early anonymous homily collections, Gatch identifies 'a tendency to read eschatology into texts in which it is not explicit', noting that '[s]pecific references to the Judgment and the Kingdom

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[337] Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), especially Chapter 4 'Antichrist Established: The Final Enemy in the Early Middle Ages', pp. 79-109.
[338] Gatch, 'Eschatology in the Anonymous Old English Homilies', at p. 123.
[339] See above Section 3.3.

have been intruded' in some passages.[340] Gatch also notes that it is a commonplace of the Western tradition from the Patristic period that the Second Coming is imminent and that eschatological comments thus 'convey a sense of urgency'. Blickling homilies X and XI read the events prophesied in Revelation into current events, the latter suggesting that all but the coming of Antichrist is past. Gatch also notes that the author of Blickling homily VII freely combines traditions that are contrary to each other.[341]

The prominent function of eschatology in the wider cultural milieu is also alluded to in Gatch's conclusion to his consideration of the *Blickling Homilies*: 'there is, indeed, so great a concentration on matters eschatological that eschatology can be said to have been the principal dogmatic interest of the compiler of the manuscript.'[342] Such a conclusion is remarkable; if eschatology can constitute the basis upon which a homiliary is compiled, there exists an audience for which learning about the faith comprised moulding apocalyptic expectations. This strong conclusion should be tempered, however, by the contrastive evidence offered in the *Vercelli Book*. Here the homilies are less urgent and less concerned with the eschatological, focusing more on repentance of sins and amendment of the audience's ways than the imminence of the apocalypse.[343] Gatch's comments implicitly ask a methodological question about the relationship of collections to each other. Thematic collections could be compiled, but under what circumstances, and for what audience or readership are more difficult questions to answer. In the case of Ælfric's homily collections there is little evidence of an authorial focus behind any thematic interest for the homilies as a series, rather, it is at the point of compilation of homiliaries in a library with a variety of homilies to choose from, as in the case of the *Blickling Homilies*, that such ideas can be explored.

Wulfstan offers an interesting counterpoint to this position, however. Wulfstan did not create a series of homilies as did Ælfric, and internal evidence is sufficient to make a case that Wulfstan did not expect to be preaching from his

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[340] Gatch, 'Eschatology in the Anonymous Old English Homilies', pp. 128-29.
[341] Ibid., pp. 130-34.
[342] Ibid., p. 134.
[343] Ibid., pp. 146-60, especially pp. 152ff.

homilies to the same audience every week. Wulfstan's corpus contains much duplication, there is only one case in which the sermon is situated specifically in the church year, and the texts are altogether designed more for a specific occasion, than for use day to day. Ælfric's homilies demand and expect reuse, Wulfstan's quite the opposite.

It was Wulfstan (II, Archbishop of York) who made most use of Antichrist, especially in his earlier homilies, and who developed the theme most completely in the late-tenth and early-eleventh centuries. Ælfric's interest in Antichrist appears to have come later in his career, and certainly after the first copies of the *Catholic Homilies* had been disseminated.[344] As Ælfric was probably slightly senior to Wulfstan in years, Ælfric's middle period and Wulfstan's early period as writers both occur around the same time, in the last five years of the tenth century. Wulfstan was also in direct correspondence with Ælfric, some of which survives, so we have some indication of each of the authors' views on the others' project, if only implicitly. As a bishop and later archbishop, Wulfstan occupied a different position from Ælfric's which gives us a slightly different set of purposes to consider in the context of his representation of the devil. More importantly for the focus of the current study, Wulfstan's episcopal position gave him access to different audiences than did Ælfric's as monk, mass-priest and, later, abbot.

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[344] Compare Peter Clemoes, 'The Chronology of Ælfric's Works', in *The Anglo-Saxon: Studies in some aspects of their history and culture presented to Bruce Dickins,* ed. by Peter Clemoes (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1959), pp. 212-47 and *Homilies of Wulfstan*, pp. 101-03.

5.2 Wulfstan

It will be useful to consider, briefly, some of the contextual information we have available for Wulfstan before embarking on a discussion of the effects of the relationship between Ælfric and Wulfstan upon their respective corpora and specifically their representation of the diabolical. Archbishop Wulfstan of York (d. 1023) has been variously described as statesman, state-builder and reformer, and by one commentator as 'the most apocalyptic commentator in all Anglo-Saxon history.'[345] Even at the most conservative assessment, Wulfstan must be described as a homilist, writer of laws and codifier of church practices.[346] As one of the two named homilists who wrote in the vernacular in the period 950-1050, Wulfstan and his work provide an important contribution to understanding the representation and deployment of the devil, but it is his engagement with Antichrist that is most striking within his canon.

Wulfstan's various ecclesiastical and political roles, and his peripatetic career, indicate something of the way in which there is an increasing consolidation of roles in Anglo-Saxon society in the early eleventh century, helped by the reforms to the church and monasteries in the late tenth century. Lionarons summarizes the remaining evidence of Wulfstan's career as follows:

> What little we know of his life has been gleaned from relatively few
> sources: charters dating from 996 through 1023 bear his signature, and he
> is mentioned by name four times in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*: at his
> accession to the bishopric of London (F 996), celebrating the consecration
> of Cnut's church at Ashingdon (D 1020), consecrating Æthelnoth as
> archbishop of Canterbury (F 1020), and at his death (E 1023). In addition

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[345] William Prideaux-Collins, '"Satan's bonds are extremely loose": Apocalyptic Expectation in Anglo-Saxon England During the Millennial Era', in *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change, 950-1050,* ed. by Richard Landes, Andrew Gow, and David C. Van Meter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 289-310, p. 294.

[346] See Dorothy Whitelock, 'Archbishop Wulfstan, Homilist and Statesman', in *Essays in Medieval History Selected from the Transactions of the Royal Historical Society on the Occasion of its Centenary,* ed. by R. W. Southern (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 42-60; Joyce Hill, 'Archbishop Wulfstan: Reformer?', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 309-24; Wormald, 'Archbishop Wulfstan: Eleventh-Century State-Builder'.

he almost certainly performed the consecration of Ælfwig as bishop of London, reported in D 1014, since the ceremony was performed at York.[347]

Evidence of Wulfstan's life prior to 996 is scarce, but scholarly opinion rests with a probable monastic background.[348] Whether or not Wulfstan was a monk himself, it is certain that he was not only sympathetic to the tenets of the Benedictine Reform movement, but an active proponent of them.[349] A note of caution should, however, be added in that Wormald notes 'there is strikingly little evidence that our Wulfstan was educated in the Æthelwoldian style, and not a lot that he was even a monk: perhaps he came from the pre-reform stage in one or other of these abbeys [Ely and Peterborough] – in which case he should have been born about 950, and would have been at least seventy when he died.'[350] Though he may not have had full monastic training during a period of monastic dominance in ecclesiastical fields, Wulfstan's ambition in both church and state is indicated not only by this career leading to the archiepiscopal see of York, but also by his broader canon of works, specifically the law codes for two kings, Æthelræd and Cnut.

Despite such achievements, it should be noted that, as Wormald reasons, 'Wulfstan was, must have been, a late developer. By 1006 he would have been at least forty, given that he was made bishop in 996 and the canonical age of ordination was thirty.'[351] Barrow's work on the diocese of Worcester (to which Wulfstan was translated in 1002, and at which point he also became Archbishop of York), however, indicates that Wulfstan probably had the bigger picture in mind, a conclusion supported by the breadth of his canon. Barrow notes 'He appears to have made little impact on his see [Worcester itself], though he did give limited

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[347] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, p. 9.

[348] Joyce Hill, 'The Benedictine Reform and Beyond', in *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature,* ed. by Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine Treharne (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 141-69, at p. 163.

[349] The *Pastoral Letters* composed by Ælfric at Wulfstan's request show in their tone Wulfstan's deference to Ælfric who identifies himself as *alumnus Æthelwoldi.* See above, Section 3.1.

[350] Wormald, 'Archbishop Wulfstan: Eleventh-Century State-Builder', p. 13.

[351] Ibid., p. 15.

support to the growth of Benedictine monasticism.'[352] Such a conclusion cannot be made for Wulfstan's time at York which is much more poorly documented in terms of surviving evidence both textual and material.[353] The paucity of evidence does not permit anything more than speculation on that matter, but the impression given by Wulfstan's approach to the Vikings in his work, and its development over his career, implies that he had a more complex task to execute in his archiepiscopal see than in his episcopal diocese when he held Worcester and York in plurality. In part, both the complexities of his task, and his monastic sympathies, are indicated by his correspondence with Ælfric.

### 5.2.1   Wulfstan and Ælfric

The relationship between the two authors, though it is coded in the way in which they react to their milieu, is also evinced by the correspondence between the two men. Although only Ælfric's responses survive, we can glean a picture of the nuances of their approaches through the content of these letters and the tasks to which Wulfstan put them beyond their original context. We also see something of the authors' attitudes towards the function of the written word, especially in a didactic context, through these letters. Ælfric and Wulfstan's correspondence has elicited a strong response from critics seeking to understand the relationship between these two prolific writers. The correspondence is also significant in that it gives an impression of the biography of the two men at the centre of our understanding of homiletic literature, and indeed Anglo-Saxon prose in general. However, the authors differ in important respects, and their personal contexts only give us a limited amount of evidence for their intent, and less for their effect on the populace of late Anglo-Saxon England at large.

Instead of going straight to the letters, Eric Stanley shows through their writings that Ælfric and Wulfstan understood fundamental tenets of the faith

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[352] Julia Barrow, 'Wulfstan and Worcester: Bishop and Clergy in the Early Eleventh Century', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 141-60, at p. 159.
[353] Christopher Norton, 'York Minster in the Time of Wulfstan', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 207-34, at p. 208.

differently from each other, especially understanding of the function of miracles and the effect of transgressing God's law.[354] This theological difference is also reflected in their use of topoi: the function of evil, demons, miracles, and law, in their texts. Indeed, their texts are working at subtly different purposes in terms of genre. Hill describes the difference between the authors' sermons as texts:

> If we wish to employ the traditional distinctions between homily and sermon, we can say that Wulfstan writes sermons, by contrast with Ælfric who writes homilies, although I am not sure that this apparent terminological exactitude is entirely appropriate for the Anglo-Saxon period.[355]

Hill is right to be sceptical about the validity of applying strict terminologies anachronistically, but the distinction between the roles of Wulfstan and Ælfric as implied by their self-definition as, in the first case bishop and archbishop, and in the second 'munuc and mæssepreost', provides a possible explanation for this difference of type between the two authors' works as their respective roles would have carried with them different audiences, contexts, and expectations.

The letters between the two authors provide a valuable insight into their common understanding of their task. Hill notes (elsewhere) that their correspondence indicates:

> two men [...] cooperating in raising the standards of the secular clergy by providing them with practical advice on the conduct of their responsibilities, setting out some canonical frameworks for behaviour, itemizing aspects of church hierarchy and liturgy, supplying basic

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[354] Stanley argues that for Ælfric, miracles are a 'celebration of God's might' whereas Wulfstan's use of terms such as 'wundor' implies that miracles are an expression of God's power. Similarly for God's law, Ælfric models a transgression of God's law as a re-enactment of Adam's first sin, whereas for Wulfstan, law is a more stylistic concern in his homilies, yet, legal form affects Wulfstan's sermons towards the end of his career. The use of law in homilies is, for Wulfstan, a matter of style and a matter of loving God's law, though more usually expressed in negative terms. Love is not a friendly concept to Wulfstan but a more treacherous one. Eric Stanley, 'Wulfstan and Ælfric: 'the true difference between the law and the gospel'', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 429-42, especially pp. 232-38.

[355] Hill, 'Reform and Resistance', p. 19.

information on religious history, and exhorting the clergy to high moral standards.'[356]

Ælfric's interest in reforming the clergy has already been noted, especially his desire to improve standards of learning. Wulfstan shares this desire, though his approach is somewhat different, as are the opportunities offered to him as a bishop rather than an abbot.[357] Their own self-understanding suggests that the reformers generally, and especially Wulfstan and Ælfric, understood their place in society as its voice of moral guidance and its teachers, and this is expressed in a genealogy of teachers which comes from the apostles to the 'lareowas'. The writers' conception of their place in society is partially expounded in the three estates model related in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, which describes the relative responsibilities of *laboratores*, *oratores* and *bellatores* which Skeat translates as labourers, beadsmen and soldiers respectively.[358] Implicitly the model is one of interdependence and so each pillar is presented as being equal to the others. Busse suggests that these special teachers (the reformers) ranked above all other *oratores* and all of the *bellatores* that Ælfric used to describe society in his *Lives of Saints*, and that Alfred had used before him to perform the same task.[359] Ælfric's position as head of the *schola* at Cerne Abbas may have contributed to his desire to provide materials for the use of priests, as the preparation of homiletic material must have been time consuming. Wulfstan's sermons, however, anticipate a grander stage for their delivery. The audience would be different, the sense of occasion would be different, and the speaker would be the author himself rather than a local priest.[360] The detachment that Ælfric inserts between his authorial

[356] Joyce Hill, 'Authorial Adaptation: Ælfric, Wulfstan and the Pastoral Letters', in *Texts and Language in Medieval English Prose,* ed. by Akio Oizumi, Jacek Fisiak, and John Scahill (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 63-75, at p. 63

[357] See above, Sections 2.3 and 3.2.

[358] *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, ed. by Walter W. Skeat, EETS OS 76, 82, 94 and 114 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co. for the EETS, 1966), pp. 120-23, ll. 812-22.

[359] Wilhelm G. Busse, '"Sua gað ða lareowas beforan ðæm folce, & ðæt folc æfter": The Self-Understanding of the Reformers as Teachers in Late Tenth-Century England', in *Schriflichkeit im frühen Mittelalter,* ed. by Ursula Schaeffer (Tübingen: Narr, 1993), pp. 58-101, at pp. 63-67.

[360] E.g. The consideration of the specific event of Wulfstan's performance of the Sermo Lupi, discussed in Jonathan Wilcox, 'Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* as Political Performance: 16 February 1014 and Beyond', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: the Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 375-96.

voice and the preacher's voice has been discussed above, and, though it is not a straightforward issue, the likelihood that Ælfric, when editing his collection, made the voice and content of the sermons more universal has been demonstrated.[361] No such decision is observable in Wulfstan's sermons, though it is present in his re-rendering of the letters prior to their distribution, and in his law codes, as is demanded by their genre. It should also be noted that subsequent users of Wulfstan's works clearly felt that the sermons were (nearly) as functional as Ælfric's, which is demonstrated by the two writers' works' cohabitation in later manuscript compilations.

On a personal level, however, the relations between Ælfric and Wulfstan, it has been suggested by Godden, 'do not suggest much friendliness or supportiveness on Ælfric's side, though they do suggest a remarkable degree of tolerance, even [...] humility, on Wulfstan's.'[362] The nature of their communication, however, is less important for the current study than the texts that Wulfstan's interest in Ælfric's works produced. Wulfstan makes extensive use of Ælfric's works, and though there is some direct relationship between the two writers in the exchange of letters, Godden notes that it is likely that Wulfstan gained access to Ælfric's homiletic material only indirectly and is unlikely to have had direct access to a full collection of the Ælfrician canon.[363]

It is Wulfstan's use of Ælfric's correspondence, rather than the correspondence itself that indicates the differences between the two authors most

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[361] See above, Sections 2.3 and 3.4.1.

[362] Malcolm Godden, 'The Relations of Wulfstan and Ælfric: a Reassessment', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 353-74, at p. 362. A possible motivation for this disparity between their rank and respect is perhaps offered by Ælfric in his *Letter to Sigeweard*, which Busse uses to show 'that within the group of *oratores* the reformers tried to establish a hierarchy exclusively founded on (patristic) erudition, with an individual's qualification according to clerical rank coming in second place only, after his learning.', Busse, 'Self-Understanding of the Reformers', p. 76.

[363] Godden, 'The Relations of Wulfstan and Ælfric: a Reassessment', p. 368. Godden qualifies this sentiment in the light of a counterargument made by Clayton that the manuscript on whose evidence Godden makes his case, CCCC 178, and Godden sees no reason not to extend this to Hatton 115, may have been distributed by Ælfric himself, implying a more direct line of communication than is elsewhere attested for these texts. Mary Clayton, 'Ælfric's *De auguriis* and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 178', in *Latin Learning and English Lore, II: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge,* ed. by Katherine O'Brien O' Keeffe and Andy Orchard (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), pp. 376-94.

clearly. Firstly it should be noted that when Wulfstan uses Ælfric as a source he frequently adapts Ælfric's words to suit his own purpose. The modifications that Wulfstan makes, and that Ælfric makes when translating his own work at Wulfstan's request, are substantial, but Hill notes that change is in the nature of the texts: 'Textual modification is, of course, inherently likely: these [the *Pastoral Letters*] were highly practical documents, of a kind open to adaptation to suit particular needs'.[364] Hill suggests that the changes made by Wulfstan 'reveal a preoccupation with highly practical matters of a most basic kind', especially in view of priestly chastity.[365]

Adaptation of the type evinced by the changes made by both men indicate their awareness of audience. Wulfstan's intentions appear to be to make the material more suitable for a less learned audience through simplification, whereas Ælfric's are mostly expansions when he turns the first letter from Latin into Old English, in order that he can make best use of this opportunity to address an audience he recognized to be wider than that of the first version. Wulfstan's changes, and his later adaptation of the material to homily form, both indicate his dedication to making the best use of the opportunity to address a specific audience.[366] The two men also indicate their understanding of audience through their modification of their own work. As has already been discussed, Ælfric is ready to edit his work, modifying the message and especially the imagery and rhetoric to privilege clarity over subtly nuanced theology. Ælfric's desire is to make the message clear rather than to get into involved and learned exposition and exegesis, which he reserves for the narrower and more able audience of his less public texts. Wulfstan on the other hand is keenly aware of performance, and privileges the performative zeal over the clarity of Ælfric's work. Wulfstan is not an especially subtle writer, as is Ælfric, but rather uses the medium of aural reception of text to give pithy phrases and images centre stage.[367] Wulfstan's knowledge also develops significantly over his early career as he gains access to

[364] Hill, 'Authorial Adaptation: Ælfric, Wulfstan and the Pastoral Letters', p. 64.
[365] Ibid., pp. 66-69, quotation at p. 68.
[366] See ibid., especially pp. 72-73.
[367] See below, Section 5.3.3, at nn. 423-24.

more texts, whereas one gets the impression it is Ælfric's understanding of the craft of writing for performance contexts that has developed in his late stage alterations. These traits are demonstrated by the two authors' deployment of Antichrist, considered below.

5.3 The representation of Antichrist

    5.3.1   Ælfric

Ælfric and Wulfstan's Antichrists are built on Gregory's approach, and
Wulfstan, at least, supplemented his view with the letter of Adso of Montier-en-
Der.[368] Emmerson, in his study of the Antichrist tradition, suggests that '[Ælfric
and Wulfstan's] treatment of Antichrist marks the first full development of the
tradition in vernacular literature.'[369] This observation, however, gives some cause
for concern. Though the heterogeneous theology of the Vercelli and Blickling
collections do not offer a similar treatment of the theme, there is implicit evidence
that Ælfric assumed his audience would know, at least roughly, what Antichrist
was. This is not to say, however, that vernacular treatments of Antichrist definitely
existed prior to Ælfric's *Preface*, but the balance of probability suggests that this
might be the case, and that these discussions were in considerably more accessible
forms than the *Preface*.[370] Both authors' treatments of Antichrist assume some
prior knowledge of Antichrist in their depictions.[371] There can be no doubt from
the content of the text in which Antichrist first appears in this 'full development'
that the audience brings to the text some prior knowledge of Antichrist as an
eschatological agent as that audience was strictly the priest: the *Preface* when first
written was probably conceived as front matter for the preacher and not for the
audience,[372] so a certain amount of understanding can be assumed for the reader
at least, whom we must assume to be an ecclesiastic in the context of sermonizing.

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[368] Adso's text was written in 954 at the behest of a Frankish noblewoman, Gerberga, and
had great impact subsequently in Western traditions. See McGinn, *Antichrist*, pp. 100-03.

[369] Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, p. 150.

[370] This is not to say that Adso's vita had travelled to England and had an impact on English
culture prior to Ælfric and Wulfstan, only that Antichrist's position as a figure of interest, and of
sufficient interest to warrant a pictorial representation or relatively public vernacular sermon,
surely predates Ælfric's *Preface*. If Gatch's suggestion that the *Blickling Homilies* represents a
collection with an eschatological focus as its compiling principle, then one would have to assume
that the collection was not only an outlier in the tradition, but the most extreme position taken in
vernacular literature for this supposition to be incorrect.

[371] See e.g. the almost casual use of the figure as an indicator of time, below n. 375.

[372] Its position in the *Preface* rather than the main body indicates that it is unlikely to be
performed. The *Preface* also contains injunctions to the scribe which would make no sense in a
performance context in their current state. See Section 2.2 above, especially at nn. 123, 139.

For the later versions which achieved a more accessible textual profile, the form in which the (wider, possibly lay) audience achieved prior knowledge of Antichrist is not known, but hints remain in the few references to Antichrist to be found in the *Blickling Homilies*, and, allusively, in visual culture. Discussing the effect of the tradition of representing Antichrist in art in the late medieval period carries with it the difficulties discussed above.[373] In terms of visual representation, of the examples McGinn cites in his history of Antichrist, only the images in the Utrecht Psalter are likely to have had a major influence on late Anglo-Saxon England and the nature of that influence beyond direct users of the manuscripts in which the images appear is unclear.[374]

Ælfric uses Antichrist only rarely in his *Catholic Homilies*, deploying the character incidentally in a handful of homilies, but in a sustained way in only one piece, the *Preface* to the First Series.[375] Godden suggests that the *Preface* was probably added to the text of the First Series in 994, but given Ælfric's limited use of Antichrist in the major part of his work, it is peculiar that the *Preface*, which introduces the themes of the First Series, and was probably added late in the project's construction, should focus so heavily on this agent.[376] The impact of the authorial perspective, added by the *Preface* on reception of the homilies and its themes, must be understood in the context of two important considerations: firstly, it functions as a collection that 'provide[s] selective but substantial coverage for Sundays in the year'[377] and is therefore one that would be used only in part on any given occasion, so it is unclear at what point the *Preface* would have been performed publicly.[378] Secondly, the *Preface* has a relatively poor survival

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[373] See above, Section 2.1.1.

[374] See McGinn, *Antichrist*, pp. 103-06, especially 104 and the figure at 106. Antichrist in the Utrecht Psalter is depicted twice in illustrations for Psalms 13 and 52.

[375] Subsequent references to the text of the *Preface* follow *CH: First Series*, pp. 173-77. The other homilies in which Antichrist is mentioned are *CH* 1.21, 1.25, 2.4, 2.7, 2.35 and 2.42. In each case Ælfric is using Antichrist in a formula, either 'togeanes antecriste' (against Antichrist) or 'antecristes tocyme' (Antichrist's coming), with the exception of *CH* 2.35 where the reference is in a similarly passive tone 'Eallswa deð antecrist ðonne he cymð' (l. 93). Ælfric also returns to Anticrist for uncollected homily 19 (B1.4.19), here referring to 'Anticristes timan' ('the time of antichrist', l. 88). *Homilies of Ælfric. A Supplementary Collection*.

[376] See *CH: Introduction*, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

[377] *Prefaces*, p. 22.

[378] This presents the possibility that Ælfric intended his *Preface* to be used by the preacher rather than for the benefit of his audience. However, the *Preface* also contains conclusive evidence

rate in the homiliaries that survive, appearing only once in full (both Latin and Old English sections) in Cambridge, University Library, Gg.3.28, and in Old English only in four more copies, CCCC MS 178/162, CCCC MS 188, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Hatton 115/Kansas Y104, and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Hatton 113/114/Junius 121, in this last case as an addition to homily 1.39.[379] The copies in the Hatton manuscripts are late and adapted to homily form, which strongly implies that they are performable, while the possibility of early influence is suppressed. *Prima facie* we cannot take these late examples as strong cases for influences on earlier thought on their own. Though the late copies provide the sermon in a performable format, they do so at a date later than the scope of the current study.[380]

Despite the difficulties involved in establishing access to this text, its message is an important indicator of Ælfric's beliefs, and is taken up by later users of the texts that were distributed in the early eleventh century, especially by Wulfstan who uses the *Preface* to construct a new homily. In the *Preface*, Ælfric couches Antichrist as either an epithet for the devil or possibly a demon that belongs to the set of devils, as 'þes deofol þe is gehaten antecrist. þæt is gereht ðwyrlice crist.' ('the devil that is called Antichrist, that is opposition-Christ', ll. 78-79) or as an agent of the devil: 'He 7 his gingran awyrdað manna lichaman digellice ðurh deofles cræft.' ('he and his followers destroy men's bodies through the devil's craft', ll. 81-82). Though Antichrist has been distinguished from the devil, to some extent Antichrist represents a development of the devil when referred to in the epithet 'gesewenlica deofol' ('visible devil', l. 75) which is more usually 'se ungesewenlica deofol' in the homilies.[381] Ælfric follows his scriptural sources in singling out Antichrist as the main agent in the 'geendung þyssere worulde'

that Ælfric intended his homilies to be performed, meaning that at this stage of the project, a view of the function of the homilies that limits their use to *lectio divina* is inappropriate. Obviously the *Preface* holds value for readers of the manuscript copies available, and in the context of *lectio divina* there is no need for further justification of its inclusion.

[379] *CH: Introduction*, p. 4. See also *CH: First Series*, pp. xvii-xxii.

[380] The relevant section of Hatton 115 and Junius 121 is dated to s. xi[2]. See 'The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220', ed. by Orietta Da Rold, et al. (University of Leicester, 2010); Ker, *Catalogue*, items 332 and 338 respectively.

[381] See *CH* 1.17 (l. 141), 1.36 (l. 275), 2.6 (l. 70), 2.11 (ll. 184, 385), 2.35 (l. 151), 2.42 (l.134), and 'ungesewenlican feond' 2.29 (l. 130).

('ending of this world', ll. 58-59), and draws freely on the forms of action to be taken established in the previous chapter.[382] Ælfric draws on motifs from, especially, *De Passio St Bartholomei Apostoli* (*CH* 1.31) and *Dominica I in Mense Septembri. Quando Legitur Iob* (*CH* 2.30), and alludes to both Simon's claim that he is Christ in *Passione Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (*CH* 1.24),[383] and to the peculiar instance where the devil comes to St Martin in the form of Jesus in *Depositio St Martini Episcopi* (*CH* 2.34).[384] This breadth of reference perhaps accounts for Emmerson's observation that Ælfric's discussion 'reveals a full knowledge of many features of the tradition [of representing Antichrist], although it is not organized according to any obvious pattern.'[385] Ælfric, then, is distinguishing Antichrist from the devil in form and action as well as the time in which the two agents act. Though Antichrist can do the same things as the post-lapsarian devil when manifest in the world, he is confined to acting in the physical world, until the landscape becomes apocalyptic. Antichrist is more human, but despite being more like the members of the audience in this regard, Antichrist's use of ambiguity and deceit makes this attribute more, rather than less, threatening.

Ælfric's depiction of Antichrist to be found in the *Preface* also embraces the moral side of the binary described above, where the text describes the 'Manega lease cristas' ('many false Christs', *Preface*, l. 62) whose intentions are deceit, and whose ultimate fate is given vivid realization:

> Fela gedreccednyssa 7 earfoðnyssa becumað on ðissere worulde ær hire geendunge. 7 þa sind ða bydelas þæs ecan forwyrdes on yfelum mannum þe for heora mandædum siððan ecelice ðrowiað on ðære sweartan helle; (ll. 69-73)

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[382] See above Chapter 4, especially Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, on the illusory miracles and false healing acts that Antichrist will undertake.

[383] Simon Magus and Nero are both identified in exegetical tradition as types for Antichrist. See Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, pp. 26-28.

[384] Specifically, Ælfric's discussion of the manner in which devils afflict unbelievers with illness and once they have power over the human's soul, removing that affliction; the devil's illusion of sending fire from heaven to take Job's possessions from him; the false claims of unholy men to be Christ in His Second Coming; and the devil's support of those who claim to be Christ by using his powers to perform 'miracles'. See above, Chapter 4.

[385] Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, p. 150.

Many trials and hardships will come to this world before its ending, and they are the harbingers of eternal trials for evil men, that for their crimes against men shall afterwards, eternally, suffer in the black hell.

This rather formulaic description of hell flows easily from the rest of the homilies and this aspect is perhaps why the search for Ælfric's sources to the *Preface* has been largely unsuccessful. Ælfric is certainly aware of the scriptural tradition of Antichrist, preserving the detail from Revelation 11.2 of the forty-two months that Antichrist will be active, here recast as 'to feorðan healfan geare' ('three and a half years', ll. 87-88).

As indicated above, the *Preface* was probably written in 994, after the texts of the First Series had gone to Wulfsige in the first instance, but still in time to affect subsequent (though still early) copies of the texts. From the evidence considered so far, we would be forced to conclude that this alteration, this first 'full development' of Antichrist was effective only in conveying to the readers of a limited number of copies the modified depiction of Antichrist. These would be the readers of manuscripts that derive from the second tranche of copies to emanate from where Ælfric was based in Dorset, in the tradition of MS K (CUL Gg.3.28) in which the *Preface* survives in full. Subsequent faithful copies in the tradition of that manuscript preserved the Antichrist material in such a form that it had an audience solely of the *readers* of those manuscripts, and not the audiences to which they performed as the material is confined to the unperformable *Preface*, and does not appear in the main body of the homilies. Fortunately, Clemoes' extensive work on the minutiae of the transmission history of the First Series allows us to take this analysis much further.

Ælfric's discussion of Antichrist's parentage is adjusted between the early, but not initial,[386] manuscript form in K, and its later form in three manuscripts (QRT), where material from the *Preface* has been used to supplement *CH* 1.39. This change alters the description from the initial description:

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[386] The initial form is best represented by British Library, Royal 7 C.xii, see *Ælfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies: British Museum Royal 7 C.XII, fols. 4-218*, and above, especially Section 3.4.2.

þonne cymð se antecrist se bið mennisc mann 7 soð deofol swa swa ure hælend is soðlice mann. 7 god on anum hade

Then the antichrist will come, that is human man and true devil, just as our Savior is true man and God in one person

to Ælfric's modified version in QRT:

he bið begyten mid forlire of were 7 of wife; And he biþ mid deofles gaste afylled.

he is begotten by fornication of man and woman. And he will be filled with the devil's spirit.[387]

This change does two things to Ælfric's presentation of Antichrist: firstly, the change in the wording of the text modifies the parentage of Antichrist to conform to Adso's description, which had been influential in Wulfstan's work, especially his eschatological homilies, probably written prior to 1002.[388] Secondly, the change in the position of the text changes the audience of this Antichrist material: making this section part of the homilies proper rather than their preface removes the uncertainty about when performance would take place, and allows this material to sit alongside that already considered in Chapters Three and Four. But the form of Antichrist that is communicated in this way is the modified version, where Antichrist is depicted as a special case in the tradition of demonic possession rather than being a mirror to Christ in his supernatural parentage.

Looking at the manuscript copies of this alteration, Clemoes dates the form of the text in one, CCCC 188 (his MS Q) to 1005-06, between Ælfric's *Latin Letter to Wulfstan* and his *First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*.[389] Clemoes' argument relies

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[387] *CH: First Series*, p. 175, ll. 73-75 and notes. See *CH: Introduction*, p. 6. The manuscripts containing this variant are CCCC 188, CCCC 178/CCCC 162, and Hatton 113/114/J121, Clemoes MSS QRT. On the relationship between this passage and its sources, see Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, pp. 150-152 and 289 nn. 9-10. Emmerson rejects Pope's supposition that Ælfric knew of Adso's work on Antichrist, and the above discussion has illustrated that Ælfric need go no further than the sources he has used elsewhere in the *CH* and scripture to create the reading to be found the *Preface.*

[388] *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock, (London: Methuen, 1963), pp. 12ff.

[389] This is Clemoes' ε phase of the homilies. *CH: First Series*, pp. 83-84.

on a complex series of suppositions, all of which appear logical and consistent. However, it should be noted that the manuscript itself is dated by Ker on the grounds of handwriting to s. xi[1] with the added note '(second quarter?)' so it is very probably not the authorial copy, only reflecting that strand of the tradition.[390] The fact that this portrayal exists in only three of the surviving manuscripts indicates that it was probably not widely adopted, and was probably fairly limited in its actual reach. What it does change, though, is our understanding of Ælfric's view of this material. Firstly, it indicates that Ælfric considered the material suitable for wider consumption, and secondly, that as with *De Dominica Palmarum*, the material needed rewording before such consumption took place.[391]

The alterations in this and the phases of alteration immediately prior to, and succeeding, this stage of alteration, phases δ, ε, and ζ, all show to some extent signs of modifying the message in the *Catholic Homilies* towards Wulfstan's eschatological homilies, probably written around five years prior to the middle of these phases (ε, represented by MS Q). Clemoes notes 'Each of these accessions treats a major theme, for the one in XVII is concerned with the duty of the preacher, the one in XVI offers further tokens of God's power to effect the general Resurrection, and the one in XXXIX concerns the need for sound doctrine in the face of the ordeals preceding the Last Judgement.'[392] These themes, as we shall see, bear a striking resemblance to the principal concerns of Wulfstan's eschatological homilies (homilies Ia, Ib, and II-V).

The chronology of Wulfstan's works is more difficult to determine than is Ælfric's. Whitelock considered the eschatological homilies to have been written first, and as a group.[393] However, Bethurum notes in her edition that '[t]he proof that these homilies came first is slight and wholly internal; perhaps in the last

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[390] Ker, *Catalogue*, item 43, at p. 70. Clemoes does support his suppositions later in his analysis: 'That it was Ælfric who used this material to augment XXXIX and that he did so after he had adapted it as an independent piece is shown by authentic revision which the piece received when it became part of XXXIX' and the accompanying note (2) 'Q has P's sentence which Ælfric added when adapting the excerpt as an independent item. Q, but not P, has authentically revised wording at 74 and an authentic additional sentence at 106.' pp. 114-15.

[391] See above, Section 3.4.2.

[392] *CH: First Series*, p. 133.

[393] *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, pp. 12ff.

decade of the tenth century there was an unusually large number of sermons on these subjects, and Wulfstan may have preached frequently on the Last Days when he was Bishop of London.'[394] If this is the case, we should be considering the eschatological homilies as broadly contemporary with Ælfric's *Preface*, and certainly predating Ælfric's authorial alterations to the homilies as laid out in Q. Bethurum does, however, go on to demonstrate that the most likely order places these homilies at the start of Wulfstan's writing career, and certainly before 1008, as these precede homilies VI and VII which 'both follow Ælfric's homilies quite closely, and in style and subject-matter belong to the period before 1008.'[395]

This provides scope for the tantalizing possibility that Ælfric was reacting to something more than his own learning and changing perception of audience when making the alterations to *CH* 1.39, potentially Wulfstan's work, but probably more general trends in the sermons of the time. If Bethurum's suggestion is right, that sermons with these concerns abound in the last decade of the tenth century, it is peculiar that Ælfric does not deal with Antichrist when he first composed the *Catholic Homilies*. Furthermore, it is especially odd that Ælfric does not clarify his position in the context of the findings of more recent work on apocalyptic expectation, which indicates that millenarianism was more likely, judging from the surviving texts, to be the superstition of the 'crankish'.[396] Godden and Emmerson have both indicated that it is unlikely that Ælfric was directly affected by Adso's text, certainly when it came to composing or editing his own homilies, so the question remains, what made Ælfric change the material? It could be that Ælfric recognized that Wulfstan's homilies, or homilies in the tradition of Wulfstan's, had become compatriots of his own works in their manuscript contexts, as was to be the case in the later tradition. Although this proposition is unprovable, nevertheless the intervention between the early and late manuscripts indicates that Ælfric's knowledge, or understanding, of the best way to deploy Antichrist in his *Catholic Homilies* developed over his career. Certainly, the description to be

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[394] *Homilies of Wulfstan*, p. 102.
[395] Ibid., p. 103. Mary Richards also appears to situate at least the first four of these homilies to before 1000. Richards, 'Wulfstan and the Millennium', p. 41.
[396] Carruthers, 'Apocalypse Now', at 409-10. Ælfric's rejection of 'crankish' beliefs is shown in his coda to *CH* 1.31. See above, Section 4.2.1.

gleaned from his later work *Sermo de die Iudicii* is more honed, no doubt in part through its more solid structure as an exposition of Matthew 24.[397]

Whatever caused Ælfric to make the changes to his own text, his use of Antichrist is fairly conventional within the broad limits of the tradition. As with its use in other homilies, Antichrist and the actions of Antichrist are situated in the future, and, with the exception of his *Preface* and the post-alteration version of homily *CH* 1.39, is only a very generalized threat. This narrative function lies in contrast to Ælfric's narratives which involved the devil up to this point, where the previous actions of the devil are described to warn the audience of his methods. To Wulfstan, writing his eschatological sermons at the height of Ælfric's career, in the early eleventh century, these threats had become increasingly imminent, with the raiding activities of Vikings coming to a crisis point in the reign of Æthelræd.

### 5.3.2   Wulfstan

Wulfstan's eschatological sermons have usually been considered as a group since Bethurum's edition.[398] Lionarons' recent edition has confirmed this habit and scholarly opinion considers all but the last, *Secundum Marcum* (Wulfstan homily V), to have been written during Wulfstan's tenure as Bishop of London (ending with his translation to Worcester and York in 1002).[399] At this early point in Wulfstan's writing career (as it survives) the relationship between Wulfstan and Ælfric has yet to leave a mark on the textual record, but influence from Ælfric on Wulfstan is manifest in the latter's use of Ælfrician material in homily IV (*De Temporibus Antichristi*) which also indicates Wulfstan's first use of Adso. This

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[397] Clemoes describes the manuscript evidence for this sermon as 'suggesting the 'middle' period (the [sermon] is in Hatton 115, a manuscript that draws on a Worcester selection of Ælfric's works, only one of which is known to have been composed after he became abbot of Eynsham); and [it has] the *Sermo* rubric that suggests circulation as a separate item.' It was probably composed shortly before or immediately after Ælfric became abbot at Eynsham. Clemoes, 'The Chronology of Ælfric's Works', p. 238.

[398] *Homilies of Wulfstan*.

[399] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, p. 43.

influence is repeated in his first homily at York, homily V which may postdate the first communication between the two authors.[400]

From a survey of the eschatological homilies it is difficult to identify a significant distinction between Wulfstan's Antichrist and Ælfric's devil which indicates the extent to which both men are conventional in their use of the tradition of diabolic material. Many of the topoi that Ælfric used for representing the devil are used with the Antichrist as a trope for the devil.

The two figures are collocated in the phrase 'deofle Antecriste' ('devil antichrist', Ib at l. 33, IV at l. 37, and V at ll. 65-66) which appears in *De Temporibus Antichristi*, *Secundum Marcum*, and the Old English version of *De Antichristo*.[401] The Latin *De Antichristo* goes further, however, implicitly identifying Antichrist with the following description of the evil powers manifest in the dangerous days ('dies illi periculosi', l. 33) at the end of time: 'sed semper docti et eruditi contra illum inimicum antiquum serpentem et Satanan sint et parati ad resistendum.' ('but [they] will have been taught and educated against the enemy, the ancient serpent who is Satan and will be prepared to resist him', ll. 34-36). This form of collocation also occurs in a number of anonymous homilies (referred to by their Cameron numbers for ease of reference here), 'deoful Antecrist' (l. 123, B.3.4.15), and 'deofol Antecrist' (l. 183, B.3.5.13).[402] Ælfric also uses this identity in his *Preface* as 'þes deofol þe is gehaten antecrist. þæt is gereht ðwyrlice crist.' ('the devil that is called Antichrist, that is opposition-Christ', *Preface* ll. 78-79) mentioned above.

The identification of Antichrist with the devil alludes to the anti-Trinity mentioned above and formulated by Emmerson.[403] Though never expressed in these terms by any Anglo-Saxon author, the allusions come through in other forms as with Ælfric's *Preface*: 'þonne cymð se antecrist se bið mennisc mann 7 soð deofol swa swa ure hælend is soðlice mann. 7 god on anum hade' ('Then the

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[400] 'The first evidence of contact between the two men comes in or soon after 1002', Godden, 'The Relations of Wulfstan and Ælfric: a Reassessment', p. 372.

[401] Quotations from Wulfstan are taken from *Homilies of Wulfstan*, translations of the Latin *De Antichristo* are taken from Joyce Tally Lionarons, 'Wulfstan's Eschatological Homilies', (2000).

[402] As 'dioful Antecrist' (ll. 34-35, Vercelli Homily 2) in *The Vercelli Homilies*.

[403] Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, pp. 22-24, see table at 24.

Antichrist will come, that is human man and true devil, just as our Savior is true man and God in one person', ll. 73-75). Wulfstan uses this identity in his Old English rendering of Ælfric's work with 'Crist is soð God and soð mann, 7 Antecrist bið soðlice deofol 7 mann.' ('Christ is true God and true man, and Antichrist is truly devil and man', *De Temporibus Antichristi*, homily IV ll. 7-8).

It is a commonplace to describe the Antichrist as the son of the devil and Wulfstan alludes to this identity once in *Secundum Marcum* (homily V) 'nu deofol sylf his mægnes mot wealdan, 7 deofles bearn swa swiðlice motan cristene bregean' ('now the devil himself may wield his power, and the devil's son very widely may terrify Christians', ll. 55-57). Elsewhere in *Secundum Marcum* the relationship is implied to be consistent with the structure as Ælfric's original *Preface* conceived it, locating Antichrist as the human son of the devil, and yet devil in human form (as Christ is to God, so Antichrist is to the devil): 'Crist was ealra bearna betst geboren þe æfre geboren wurde, 7 Antecrist bið ealra þæra bearna wyrst on þas woruld geboren þe ær oððe æfter æfre gewurde oððe geweorðe' ('Christ was the best of children that was ever born, and Antichrist will be the worst of children born in this world, that before or after ever came or shall come', ll. 37-40). Later in the same sermon Wulfstan offers a nuanced version of this idea, that brings his sermon more in line with the view expressed in Ælfric's modified sermon: 'He bið mennisc man geboren, ac he bið þeah mid deofles gaste eal afylled' ('He will be born of a human man, but he will be entirely filled with the devil's spirit', ll. 66-67), and again with the epithet 'se mennisca deofol' ('the human devil', l. 89).

Similarly, in the Latin version of the *De Antichristo* (homily Ia) Wulfstan refers to 'filius perditionis' ('son of perdition', ll. 53-54). Elsewhere in the same homily (ll. 24-29), Wulfstan refers to the tradition of the Beast from Revelation 11.7, which Emmerson identifies as Antichrist in the inversion of the Trinity.[404] The anti-Trinity is never fully explained and it is unlikely, from the surviving

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[404] Ibid., p. 24.

evidence, that it was ever conceived by Anglo-Saxon authors in those terms,[405] but the link between Antichrist and Christ and efforts to map onto Antichrist inversions of Christ's life are certainly prevalent.

As with the devil and his attendant demons, Antichrist is often represented as a chief agent with subordinates to aid him in his task. The definition of Antichrist is extended in this regard to a type of person, as much as an individual. Using a similar method, Ælfric's deployment of devils conforms to an order of the world in which devils operate upon those erring Christians who do not understand the source of the power they are respecting. The devil frequently acts through human agents over whom it has power, by either devotion or possession. Antichrist, on the other hand, is defined as a false Christ. Often this is used as a two-way identity, and those that are associated with Antichrist, the men who choose to align themselves with him, in some texts, become Antichrists themselves. The hierarchy of the attendants reflects the distinction between the devil, devils and devilish men, such as Hermogenes or Simon in the *Catholic Homilies*. This hierarchy is reflected in Wulfstan's work and described implicitly in the Latin *De Antichristo* (homily Ia), as well as in Wulfstan's homily *Secundum Lucam* (homily III). In the former, Wulfstan uses the ambiguous formula 'Anticristum et eius ministros' ('Antichrist and his ministers', l. 42) where the ministers could be either attendant demons or people who have become Antichrists themselves. The opening of the homily perhaps lends itself more to the latter interpretation:

> Omnis qui secundum cristiane professionis rectitudinem aut non uiuit aut aliter docet quam oportet, Anticristus est, quia secundum interpretationeum sui nominis appellatur. (ll. 1-3)

> All those who profess correct Christianity, but do not live by it or teach it to others as is proper, are Antichrists, because according to this definition they are called by that name.

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[405] I am aware of no expositions of this nature in either the vernacular literature or in the corpus of Latin texts available to Anglo-Saxon authors, derived from Lapidge, *Library*.

*Secundum Lucum* (homily V) takes this further, and relies on it as a premise:

> ðæt is, þæt licceteras 7 leaslice cristene hrædlice hreosað of rihtan geleafan
> 7 to Anticriste geornlice bugað 7 weorþaþ his gefylstan eallum heora
> mihtum (ll. 50-53)

> That is, that liars and lying Christians will fall quickly from correct belief,
> and bow to Antichrist eagerly, and worship his followers with all their
> might.

These followers are referred to frequently, especially in the Latin *De Antichristo* (homily Ia), which does raise the question as to how much this identity was being explained for the benefit of the ecclesiastical professionals that Wulfstan will have addressed in his time as bishop, and how much to his lay audiences, to whom he would also have access. This is described by Emmerson as a form of typology for Antichrist, cognate with the types for the devil appearing in the Old Testament, such as Pharaoh, Holofernes and Nebuchadnezzar, all of whom receive vernacular treatments in the poetic corpus.[406] Antichrist draws on types through the New Testament as well, such as Simon Magus, Hermogenes and Nero.

The narrative of Simon Magus is retold in *De Temporibus Antichristi* (homily IV) as it appears in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Hatton 113 and CCCC 201, but not the late copy found in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 343, which is the base text for Bethurum's edition. Bethurum suggests that this section 'shows no marks of Wulfstan's style' and so she does not include the episode.[407] Lionarons reviews the debate surrounding this passage, suggesting that there is very little evidence that this passage is not Wulfstan's, or, if it is by another author, there is no evidence that it was not incorporated into Wulfstan's sermon by Wulfstan himself as an exemplum, as he had done with other texts before (though not in such a sustained way as the passage makes up 56 lines of the sermon).[408] However, as this is the form of the text that enjoys earlier transmission, for the current study the episode should be considered part of the text, since whether it is an indicator

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[406] See *Judith*, *Exodus* and *Daniel*.
[407] *Homilies of Wulfstan*, p. 30.
[408] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, pp. 62-63.

of authorial intent or not is not the material concern, but rather the effect of the presentation on the audience. It is the transmitted version that attests to its early form, so it is this form that will be considered here. For simplicity I have referred to its interpolator as Wulfstan here, though the analysis, in its assumptions, does not make this a necessary condition of the utility of considering the impact of this section of text on audiences.

Wulfstan is more conventional than is Ælfric in his presentation of the Simon Magus narrative, implicitly using Simon as a type for Antichrist, rather than for the devil as Ælfric does.[409] This link to Antichrist is provided by the narrative's interpolation into the rest of the sermon which builds on the theme of Antichrist, rather than within the narrative itself, perhaps lending some support to Bethurum's thesis. If the interpolation is authorial, it represents an ambitious typology on Wulfstan's part, and is only a qualified success as the contention surrounding the passage perhaps indicates. Lionarons' reading suggests that this interpolated typology shows 'a typological sophistication that is not found either in his [Wulfstan's] sources for the Antichrist legend or in the two Old English analogues to the Simon Magus story.'[410] The two analogues are Ælfric's sermon *De Passione Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (*CH* 1.24) and Blickling Homily XV. In the first case, it has been shown above that Ælfric's interest in Antichrist came late in the life of the *Catholic Homilies* so there would be no reason for Ælfric, in 990 or before, to have included a reference to Antichrist. His later interest in Antichrist, perhaps suggests that when he came to edit the homilies in 994, *De Passione Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (*CH* 1.24) may have been as good a candidate for additions from the *Preface* as homily 1.39 which is where he eventually deployed his material on Antichrist, but this seems to be splitting hairs somewhat. The case for Blickling Homily XV being a good candidate to join the traditions is arguably stronger.[411]

Nevertheless, as the early copies stand, Lionarons' analysis holds:

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[409] See the discussions of Sorcerers above, Section 4.2.2.
[410] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, p. 66.
[411] See Gatch, 'Eschatology in the Anonymous Old English Homilies', pp. 152-54.

> [b]y joining the two legends, the homily compels its audience to look
> backwards and forwards in time simultaneously, back to the deceptions
> practiced by Simon Magus and forward to those anticipated on the part of
> Antichrist, thus underscoring the precarious position of human beings in
> the present, balanced delicately between past dangers and future threats,
> with only the *god lar* of the homilist as their guide.[412]

The use of such an ambitious narrative lens of this nature would be an unusual tactic for Wulfstan, but it is not beyond the scope of his mandate. Such a reading does suggest that Wulfstan's approach expected the reliance of the audience on their preachers which his comments elsewhere undermine to some extent, as he is critical of their poor learning, though practical in his response to it.[413]

The narrative itself is very similar to Ælfric's but for the current study the salient points are as follows: firstly, Simon is identified as 'se deofles mann' ('the devil's man', *De Temporibus Antichristi*),[414] five times in the episode. The sentence immediately preceding this section, which is also omitted in Bodley 343, and therefore from Bethurum's edition, includes the following explanation of the need for caution: '7 micele þearfe agan þa ðe þæs timan gebidað þæt hi ware beon 7 þæt hi gemyndige beon þara þinga þe deofles menn oft ær þurh drycræft drugon.' ('And great care must be taken by those who live in these times so that they are cautious, and should be mindful of the things the devil's men often did before through sorcery'). Later this explanation the corruptive power of the false miracles is attributed to being performed 'þurh drycræft mid deofles fultume' ('by sorcery with the devil's help'). Simon's powers are constantly and specifically attributed to the devil, rather than Antichrist, and it is spirits of the devil that carry him before his death. It is through the 'deofles cræft' ('power of the devil') that Simon is able

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[412] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, pp. 66-67.

[413] In the text *Be gehadedum mannum*, Wulfstan accepts that it is necessary to ordain the partially trained or 'samlæredne' priests on the condition that they promise to undertake further study. See *Die "Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical": ein Werk Erzbischof Wulfstans von York*, ed. by Karl Jost, (Bern: Francke, 1959), p. 221.

[414] References to this section of the text are provided from Lionarons' online edition of *De Temporibus Antichristi* and so do not have line numbers. Lionarons considers this section to be part of the homily in contrast to Bethurum's edition, so it is part of her 'edited text' version on the webpage. Joyce Tally Lionarons, 'Wulfstan's Eschatological Homilies: *De Temporibus Antichristi*', (2000).

to operate, and he does so in order to propagate 'þæs deofles gedwyld' ('the devil's heresy' as Lionarons renders it in her translation; though 'gedwyld' certainly carries this meaning, 'error' is possibly less charged). If Bethurum is right that this section is an interpolation, then it is noteworthy that, whereas the rest of the sermon locates the devil in reference to Antichrist, here a type for Antichrist is being located solely in terms of the devil, though in the context of an exposition of Antichrist. In a previous section, which Bethurum does not identify as problematic, Wulfstan locates the signs in relation to the devil and not Antichrist, and this collocation is presented as a coda to his description of the tribulations of Job, caused by the devil. Here then, it seems, that Wulfstan, or the interpolator, takes Antichrist as a continuation of the devil, not a separate being.

This section also contains a description of idolatry that is very similar to Ælfric's description: '7 man hæfde geworht þa on þam dagum on rome anlicnessa, 7 þæt hæðene folc þurh deofles lare weorðedon þa heom for godas' ('And men had made, in those days in Rome, likenesses, and the heathen folk, through devil's lore worshipped them as gods'). The extent to which Wulfstan identifies scriptural discussions of idolatry with folk practices that are contemporary to him is not established in these homilies, but Meaney has considered his approach to the theme in his corpus, although her focus is mostly on his later period when he is concerned with Norse heathenism in his Northern see.[415] Meaney does identify, in the rest of Wulfstan's canon prior to *Sermo Lupi* (1014), a concern with sites 'which appear to have a kind of pagan sanctity', which, she argues, are treated indiscriminately from his later treatments of, presumably Norse, pagan sites in the *Northumbrian Priests' Law*.[416] Meaney also identifies divination as a heathen practice associated with these sites,[417] but neither this nor the heathen places appear to have troubled Wulfstan in his early career. Though it is conjectural, it seems unlikely that these practices would have been as much of a concern for Wulfstan in London as they were later in York.

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[415] See Jesch, 'Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism' in Late Anglo-Saxon England'.
[416] Meaney, 'Wulfstan and 'Heathenism'', especially pp. 486-99, quotation at 486.
[417] Ibid., p. 478, n. 65.

Wulfstan's model of the Antichrist identifies these attendants and the men associated with him as his limbs. The image of a *corpus* in Christ or in the devil enjoys a rich tradition in the vernacular homilies and is an important part of the development of both Wulfstan and Ælfric's deployment of imagery and understanding of the devil especially, so I will consider it here in some detail. In the Latin *De Antichristo* (homily Ia) Wulfstan describes this attribute: 'Multi ætiam tempora Anticristi non uidebunt, sed tamen in membris eius multi inueniuntur, sicut in euangelio legitur: Surgent enum pseudocristi et pseudoprophete…' ('Many people of this time will not see Antichrist, yet many of his limbs may be found, as it is read in the gospel. "Pseudo-Christs and pseudo-prophets will arise…"', ll. 6-9). Again, in the Old English version of *De Antichristo* (homily Ib) Wulfstan deploys this image: 'And ðeah þæt sy þæt fela manna Antecrist sylfne næfre his eagum ne geseo, to fela is þeah his lima þe man wide nu geseon' ('And though it may be that many a man never see Antichrist with his eyes, still too many of his limbs now one can see widely', ll. 12-14). The 'limbs of Antichrist' topos is an extension of the devil's limbs, to be found in the *Catholic Homilies*, which is itself a perverse reflection of the scriptural tradition of Christ as head of the Church, and his worshippers as his limbs.[418]

The limbs of the Antichrist are identified with the false Christs. In *Secundum Mattheum* (homily II) Wulfstan lists the signs of the end of the world, quoting from scripture in the first instance: 'Multi enim uenint in nomine meo dicentes: Ego sum Cristus; et multo seducent' ('Many will come in my name, saying: I am Christ and they will seduce many', ll. 11-12) and later referring to 'pseudoprophete' ('false prophets', l. 20) and in his Old English exposition of this quotation he describes

> Ða andwyrde he heom 7 cwæð þæt hy ðearfe ahtan þæt hi wære wurdan
> þæt hy ænig man to swicollice ne bepæhte mid leaslicre lare 7 mid
> egeslican gylpe; forðam, he cwæð, þæt mænig wyrð þe gyt cimeð on uferan

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[418] See above, Section 3.4.1, especially at n. 232. This multifaceted element is perhaps reminiscent of the idea of Antichrist represented by the seven-headed beast in formulations which suggest this image as Antichrist's manifestation in the anti-Trinity, see above, especially at n. 336.

tidan þé leaslice leogeð 7 egeslice gylpeð, namað hine sylfne 7 hiwað to
gode, swylce hit Crist sy. (ll. 37-42)

Then he answered them and said that they need/ought to be careful that no
one deceive them with false teaching and with terrible boasts, because, he
said, that many will yet come in the future times, that will lie falsely, and
boast terribly, name and fashion themselves God, as if it were Christ.

The list that Wulfstan offers is reminiscent of Ælfric's homily *De Passione
Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (*CH* 1.24), which relates the story of Simon, where the
sorcerer does exactly that, claiming to be Christ and performing the false miracles
that are undone by the apostles, and intending to lead the people astray through
his false teaching. Of Wulfstan's passage, Lionarons notes 'that Wulfstan was
thinking specifically about the figure of Antichrist in connection with the false
prophets – and that he expected his audience to be familiar with the name if not
the full legend – is evidenced by the fact that he interprets the passage as a direct
reference to Antichrist even though Antichrist is not mentioned by Matthew'.[419]

Ælfric uses the idea of the *corpus diaboli* in *Dominica Prima in
Quadragesima* (*CH* 1.11), in order to universalize the threat, and animate his
representation of the devil into a manifestation to which the audience can relate
their experience. By casting every evil man as part of the devil's 'lyma' the
audience will have the opportunity to face the devil in their lives and participate,
on a more humble level, in Christ's temptations 'Deoful is ealra unrihtwisra manna
heafod: & þa yfelan men sint his lyma. Nu geþafode god þæt þæt heafod hine
costnode: & þæt ða lymu hine ahengon' ('The devil is the head of all unrighteous
men, and the evil men are his limbs. Now, God allows that the head tempt him and
that the limbs hang him.' *CH* 1.11, ll. 34-36). The concept of the *corpus diaboli* is
returned to by Ælfric as an aside in *Natale Omnium Sanctum* (*CH* 1.36, l. 278), in
*Dominica Prima in Adventu Domini* (*CH* 1.39, l. 87) and in the MS Q variant of
*Dominica Secunda post Pasca* (*CH* 1.17, supplementary material, at l. 167).

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[419] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, p. 51.

Ælfric uses the *corpus Christi* tradition in his discussion of the implications of the brotherhood of Christ and his description of man as corpus in the very literal sense of body: 'Crist is ure heafod & we sind his lima: he is mid ure menniscnysse befangen & he hæfð urne lichaman. þone ðe he of þam halgan mædene marian genam.' ('Christ is our head and we are his limbs, he is seized with our mannishness and he has our bodiliness. Which he received from the holy maiden Mary', *CH* 1.19 ll. 27-29) This sentiment is thrown into relief by the coda:

> For þi we magon cuðlice to him clypian swa swa to urum breþer. gif we þa broðerrædene swa healdað swa swa he us tæhte. þæt is þæt we ne sceolon na geþafian. þæt deofol mid ænigum unþeawum us geweme fram cristes broþorrædene. (*CH* 1.19, ll. 29-33)

> so we may certainly hold with to him just as to our brother, if we maintain the brotherhood just as he taught us, that is that we should not allow the devil with any evil customs to pervert from Christ's brotherhood.

This introduces the oppositional nature of the two groups: those who follow Christ and those who follow the devil. Interestingly, here Ælfric does not use the *corpus Christi/corpus diaboli* opposition but instead adheres to a more Augustinian reading, and opposes the temples and familial relations instead of bestowing the agency of either party on mankind. This, then, was an image which Ælfric allowed to play with the distinction between the figurative and the literal in a way usually reserved for the devil. This is a more positive ambiguity that is perhaps indicative of Ælfric's understanding of the need to keep the audience engaged with the matter of aligning themselves to Christ in opposition of the devil, appealing to the concept of familial relation and therefore implying obligation rather than subsuming this aspect into the *corpus* metaphor.

In sum, then, Wulfstan's presentation of Antichrist draws heavily on the same tradition as Ælfric's presentation of the devil, even where Ælfric is not being used as a source. Indeed, for the very earliest of Wulfstan's homilies no direct sources have been identified, apart from scripture. The fact that without directly quoting from works Wulfstan still arrives at a representation that lies squarely within the tradition of the devil of Ælfric's very learned and far more transparently

sourced representations, expresses eloquently the stability of the tradition in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Furthermore, it speaks of its wide influence, which goes some way to explaining how the authors can rely on prior knowledge of the tradition to contextualize the more nuanced explanations of Antichrist and the devil which the authors present.

Where Wulfstan's Antichrist differs from Ælfric's devil, however, is that his discussion of Antichrist never concerns Antichrist's appearance.[420] Wulfstan leaves this as a deliberate ambiguity, presumably in order not to limit the watchfulness of his audience to specific physical manifestations of evil, but rather to keep the audience watchful for evil however it manifests itself. These ambiguities are necessary in order for Antichrist to be deployed as Wulfstan intends in the homilies. Antichrist is not a continuous threat, as the devil is, but is temporally situated in the future, and directly prior to the apocalypse. The apocalypse itself does not enjoy a description in Wulfstan's homilies, but its inevitability and imminence are frequently repeated.

### 5.3.3   Wulfstan and his audience

We can perhaps see something of Wulfstan's approach to his audience in his amendments to pre-existing material as we have seen with Ælfric. At the most literal level we can see these amendments in the annotations made in Wulfstan's own hand, identified by Ker.[421] Ker notes 'as a reviser, Wulfstan adds two-stress phrases like *swa swa god wolde*, *wrece god swa he wille* or *gyme se þe wille* which were not in the scribe's text because they were not in the exemplar.'[422] The intensifiers added by Wulfstan make up a large part of his alterations to texts, both when he is correcting copy as it leaves the scribe, as here, and when deploying a source within one of his own compositions. From a close study of what Wulfstan does and does not change in reproducing work of Alfredian origin, Dance suggests

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[420] This is not particularly unusual in the tradition, although McGinn notes that this period saw some tradition of visual representations develop. See McGinn, *Antichrist*, pp. 103-06.

[421] N. R. Ker, 'The Handwriting of Archbishop Wulfstan', in *England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock,* ed. by Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 315-31, especially pp. 319-31.

[422] Ibid., at p. 319.

that Wulfstan's interest in editing the work is 'cleaning up the syntax or adding emphasis in key places, and indeed [...] adding to and modifying the punctuation.'[423] Wulfstan's approach to his audience is linked to his distinctive style, which Orchard demonstrated to be one of repetition that 'operate[s] at five levels of discourse, namely repetition of sounds and individual words, repetition of formulaic phrases, repetition of sentences and sentence structures, repetition of themes and paragraphs, and repetition of entire compositions.'[424]

Wulfstan tends to use more direct, and more rhetorical methods to convey his point than does Ælfric, whose emphasis is more on the strength of learning and making the complicated understandable. Wulfstan does not seem to engage with complicated material, preferring to use the immediacy of a threat rather than to persuade his audience through involved reasoning. Wulfstan tends to alter the nature of his sources in order that they better suit his purpose, as Orchard describes '[w]here Ælfric adopts, Wulfstan adapts.'[425] Generally, Wulfstan avoids allegory, with the one exception of the allegorical explanation of the pericope in *Secundum Lucam*, of which Lionarons states: 'without the attraction of one of his favorite themes, he most likely would have eschewed Abbo's allegorical reading in favour of a more straightforward interpretation.'[426] Furthermore, this unusual use of allegory serves Wulfstan's purpose in a different way, Lionarons continues:

> The allegory [...] serves a second purpose, however, in keeping Wulfstan's audience from focusing too closely on the mystery and the terror of the celestial events in order to concentrate their attention on the more important moral danger: when God withholds his miracles and those of his saints during the Final Days, faith will be difficult if not impossible to

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[423] Richard Dance, 'Sound, Fury, and Signifiers; or Wulfstan's Language', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference,* ed. by Matthew Townend (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 29-62, p. 42.

[424] A. P. McD. Orchard, 'Crying Wolf: Oral Style and the *Sermones Lupi*', *ASE,* 21 (1992), pp. 239-64, p. 258.

[425] A. P. McD. Orchard, 'The Library of Wulfstan of York', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain,* ed. by Richard Gameson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 394-700, p. 695.

[426] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, p. 54.

maintain for those who have not been enlightened to the nature of Antichrist.[427]

Wulfstan's aims, then, are to motivate rather than to persuade. He is manipulating his audience's attention and emotional state simultaneously, in order to create a more effective performance, or performable text.

In terms of audiences' access to Wulfstan's canon, the situation is quite different from that of Ælfric.[428] Firstly, Wulfstan does not provide the larger part of his canon in one homogeneous collection as Ælfric did; rather his work is scattered amongst (early) eleventh-century manuscripts, and evidence of his eschatological work being collected together in manuscripts of Wulfstaniana only survives in manuscripts constructed after his death.[429] The impression is that for Wulfstan at least, his sermons provided an eventful text, not one to be repeated on occasions, but to be used for a specific function in a specific context. Secondly, Wulfstan's career as Bishop and Archbishop, starting in his role as Bishop of London in 996, and continuing to his death as Archbishop of York in 1023, meant that his duties were quite different from those of a 'munuc and mæssepreost' as Ælfric defines himself. The role of a bishop in the context of the teaching office is identified by Gatch as being substantially different from that of a priest or monk.[430] Finally,

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[427] Ibid., p. 54.

[428] Discussed above, Section 2.3.

[429] As in Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343, and Hatton 113. See Wilcox, 'Dissemination of Wulfstan's Homilies', pp. 201-05. The first collection of the eschatological homilies appears in CCCC 201 which dates from the mid-eleventh century and contains both the texts of Wulfstan and those texts that concerned him: Ælfric's pastoral letter and the *Benedictine Office*. See Bethurum, 'Wulfstan', at pp. 242-44; Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, pp. 12-22. See also The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220, Junius 121. The pair CCCC 419 and 421 are probably contemporary with Wulfstan and contain his homilies on the Christian Faith, the Archiepiscopal Letter and only the homily *Secundum Lucam* of the homilies that have be discussed here. His own collection, the Commonplace Book, appears to have been thought, probably by Wulfstan himself, to have been an appropriate location of the Evil Days sermons, as established by BL Cotton Nero A.i. See Ker, *Catalogue*, item 164 (who dates the relevant section to s. xi[in]); The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220; and Hans Sauer, 'The Transmission and Structure of Archbishop Wulfstan's "Commonplace Book"', in *Old English Prose: Basic Readings,* ed. by Paul E. Szarmach (New York and London: Garland, 2000), pp. 339-94. Other copies of the Commonplace Book do not preserve this tradition, as with its best text, CCCC 190. The nature of the transmission, however, indicates that this is not simply collection *per se* but rather selective collection for a functional purpose. Wulfstan, if he himself motivated this collection's features, was still manipulating a corpus as much as Ælfric in his series, *and chose to do so without the Antichrist sermons.*

[430] Gatch, *Preaching and Theology*, pp. 36-37. See above, Section 3.2.

Wulfstan's approach to his own texts was quite different from Ælfric's. Wulfstan reworks his homilies specifically for the occasions on which he is to perform them. Unlike the *Catholic Homilies* in their distributed form, in the first instance these are texts to be performed in a specific setting, to a specific audience, and by Wulfstan himself.[431] Re-workings are not limited to 'eventful' scenarios, however, and in Wulfstan's reengagement with his own work, he shows sympathy to the different needs of different types of audience. This is most forcefully expressed in his Old English rendering of the Latin *De Antichristo* (homilies Ib and Ia respectively) sermon, which not only presents the material in a more widely accessible language, but also 'the ideas found in the Latin are reworked and simplified to suit an audience that was perhaps less well educated than those for whom the Latin homily was designed'.[432]

It appears that, in terms of the individuals, Wulfstan probably performed sermons in front of more people than did Ælfric during their respective lifetimes, but in terms of the impact of the two authors' texts, Wulfstan's are far more difficult to come to conclusions about than are Ælfric's. A general trend can be seen that there are far fewer copies of Wulfstan's works than Ælfric's and they are made over a shorter time period. Assuming all texts face equal dangers in survival, there is scope to say that Ælfric's texts reached a more expansive audience than Wulfstan's, during the texts' active lives.

The function of the sermons when first performed is also different in type from those of Ælfric. Questions of agency are more complicated for a subsequent copy of Wulfstan's work, as, unlike Ælfric, when recording the homilies Wulfstan is not lending his words to another to deploy his authority *in absentia*, but rather his physical presence is expected for their performance.[433] In the case of later users, then, Wulfstan's works are being coopted to a subsequent context, where Ælfric is providing his texts for just this purpose. Ælfric is explicitly making texts for

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[431] Wilcox, 'Wulfstan's *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* as Political Performance: 16 February 1014 and Beyond', especially pp. 383-88 on the sermon's first incarnation, and pp. 388ff. on its subsequent versions.

[432] Lionarons, *Homiletic Writings of Wulfstan*, p. 56.

[433] See Swan, 'Preacher and Audience'. See also above, Section 2.3.

distribution at the point at which they are disseminated, whereas we have no such statement of intent from Wulfstan. These observations leave us with a very different understanding of the uses for which Wulfstan's homilies were conceived. They are driven by the event at which they are to be delivered, by the voice in which they are to be performed, and are composed for the specific audience which is to be expected to attend.

5.4 Conclusions

It has long been understood that, as a literary device, Antichrist is most frequently used by Wulfstan, who develops the theme which clearly fascinates him throughout his early career. What has been less clear is the way in which Ælfric's engagement with the figure also changed over time and with a similar trajectory to Wulfstan's. The representations themselves, although developing through the texts considered, and their various versions, perform very similar functions as those of the devil, and the explicit collocation of the two in epithets such as 'deofle Antecriste' is testimony as to how ill-defined the space between the two was in the late Anglo-Saxon imagination. Antichrist may have been more tempting to Wulfstan, and may have become more tempting to Ælfric, as a character whose action is explicitly set in the future from any given performance of any given text. This is a necessary corollary of the orthodoxy of the two writers in rejecting the proposition that the year of Antichrist's coming can be calculated from scriptural or patristic material. Wulfstan needed his threats to be temporally situated in the (not too distant) future in order to motivate his audience to act in the present, and to affect the speed at which that which is prophesied comes.

The audience itself is more difficult to define for Antichrist than it is for the devil because of circumstantial factors with each author's work. In the case of Ælfric it seems that his modifications to his view on Antichrist, or rather to the view that he wanted to transmit to the audiences that he must have understood he was reaching, took little effect in actuality, regardless of his intentions. In the case of Wulfstan the question of audience is simply more vexed than it is for Ælfric, and the relative paucity of copies further hinders the analysis. Nevertheless, it is clear from the limited manuscript evidence for collections of Wulfstan's eschatological sermons, and the ineffectiveness of late stage alterations to the overall impression given by the *Catholic Homilies* in Ælfric's case, that simple incidence analysis cannot hope to be an effective index from which to study the impact of given manuscript witnesses or the impact of given manuscript variations, and ultimately the impact of texts or even themes upon late Anglo-Saxon audiences.

6.0 Conclusions and further work

The fundamental question underpinning this investigation is "what would most people know about the devil in late Anglo-Saxon England?" As such, the investigation has been concerned with both the representation of the devil and how that representation was disseminated to the wider audience of the period, its reception. The task has involved bringing together traditional approaches of textual analysis and manuscript studies with more recent approaches, considering texts as performances and considering the influence of performance context and audience on the way in which themes are communicated and transmitted in the surviving textual record.

Finding audiences has proven difficult in this investigation, as it has for previous scholars. By focussing on the relationships between types of evidence that survive, this study has sought to understand the contexts in which the large lay population of England at the turn of the millennium would have gained access to material that portrayed the devil. In terms of reception, it was noted initially that it is highly unlikely that a preacher was faced with a completely blank canvas when it came to the understanding of the devil in his audiences. The devil appears in law codes from the early period, in the closing years of the seventh century, and continues to serve a function in this context through to the early eleventh century. As documents which are self-consciously traditional and rely on shared understanding, it is likely that the type of information transmitted in the law codes was sufficiently well understood as to be commonplace in the period. Furthermore, the developing environment of ecclesiastical geography of late Anglo-Saxon England admits of the possibility that visual representations in art found a home in churches and contexts more public than that of their manuscript witnesses (e.g. stone crosses), which comprise our access to these representations. These factors, as well as internal evidence from, especially, the homilies, imply that understanding of the devil in the laity was, though ill-defined, present in some basic form. In even its earliest representations, the devil is deployed in a functional context and with a function of its own within that context.

The first research question considered the representation of the devil most widely performed in late Anglo-Saxon England. It has been argued that vernacular preaching texts are likely to have been highly formative in terms of influencing the laity. Of these texts, manuscript evidence favours Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* on the grounds of both external evidence: that they are widely distributed, were disseminated by both monastics and the episcopacy, and later enjoyed adoption and adaptation in subsequent writers' works; and on the grounds of internal evidence: the implied performativity, the prefatory material that states the aims of the project, and the implied audience from authorial comments maintained in the body of the homilies themselves. Considering the incidence of early copies of the homilies, in the fifty years following the millennium, the texts that are most copied are all homilies from the First Series of *Catholic Homilies*.[434]

The representation of the devil found in these homiletic texts is nuanced, internally inconsistent, and highly fluid. It does not bear the hallmarks of interests similar to those that drove the representation of the devil in the less widely distributed poetic corpus, in which the devil, as an expressive opportunity for poets, is explored more freely than in the texts with which this study has been concerned. The authors of the homilies were concerned more with the didactic function of their task, and therefore with the didactic possibilities offered by deploying the devil in carefully structured and explained narratives. Where in poetry the devil can take on a vivid image and a fully-realised psychological portrait, in the homiletic texts such a depiction is not warranted. The function is to teach, and though we, as critics, can perhaps learn more about the way in which what we call 'psychology' was discerned by Anglo-Saxons from their poetic achievements, the Anglo-Saxon understanding of the function of text and metaphor is evinced much more readily in the homilies. Ælfric and Wulfstan both indicate, through their writings, that the expressive opportunity is ignored in the

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[434] Of the manuscripts that survive and can plausibly be dated to this period, the texts that achieve most copies are the homily for *Pentecost* (ten copies), *Feria Tertia. De Dominica Oratione* (nine), *De Initio Creaturæ* (eight), *Easter, First Sunday after Easter, Feria IIII. De Fide Catholica, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost* (all seven copies).

face of using text for a task, to manipulate and manage the audience, and here the devil provides the ideal locus for motivating change in the audience's lifestyles.

The position of the representation of the devil found in the homiletic texts with respect to the tradition of representation of the devil throughout the medieval period is that it comprises a conservative but extensive understanding of the types of changes that have occurred in the broader tradition to the point at which these depictions were composed. Its later influence on writers has not been considered here, except in the case of interaction between Ælfric and Wulfstan, but these authors' works are both adopted and adapted by subsequent generations, confirming the longevity of their works' impact on the canon.[435]

The second and third questions concerned the place of the author in the relationship between representation and reception: firstly the extent to which authors' awareness of audience affected the construction of their texts, and secondly how it affected individual portrayals of the devil. In the case of Ælfric the influence of audience on his work is evinced by both his approach to the material he presents and the methods of presentation he uses. Ælfric's re-engagement with his own work: the re-deployment of his eschatological content from the *Preface* to the First Series into the body of one of the homilies;[436] the clarification of, especially, the images that would have had a greater resonance with a monastic audience than their lay counterparts in *In Dominica Palmarum*;[437] and his recapitulation of material he has covered in other texts, all indicate that audience had a major impact on the way in which Ælfric pitched and shaped the material he intended to be communicated.[438] Ælfric is self-consciously writing scripts for use in contexts beyond his control, and so exerts strict and calculated control on the tone and message of his work as strongly as possible, in order that his texts retain their efficacy beyond his own community. A good example of this is the way in which Ælfric places a diatribe against the use of sources of ill-repute into the

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[435] See, e.g. Wilcox, 'Dissemination of Wulfstan's Homilies' for the subsequent impact of Wulfstan's work on textual culture, and the extensive recopying of Ælfric's work into the thirteenth century.

[436] See above, Section 5.3.1.

[437] See above, Section 3.4.2.

[438] See above, Sections 3.4, 3.4.3 and 5.3.1.

mouth of a parish priest in the opening of *In Letania Maiore. De Dominica Oratione.*[439] Here Ælfric is not only explaining the strict parameters he has placed on his project while constructing it, but is also imposing those self-same levels of orthodoxy on the priest who is performing this sermon. By using the priest as a mouth-piece for these sentiments, Ælfric is limiting that priest's free choice of source material in the future, as an audience that has heard this homily may well question the priest's use of the *Visio Pauli* in a later sermon.

Wulfstan was also aware of audience as indicated by his amendments to texts discussed above.[440] However, Wulfstan conceived of his texts in a different way from Ælfric and this is likely to have been motivated by a different perception of audience. Wulfstan's texts have been described as 'eventful', i.e. they are conceived for an event, a specific performance context, and the anticipated audience of that context. This narrows considerably the range of tastes and prejudices to which Wulfstan was moulding his texts. Ælfric, by contrast, is required by his task to maintain a broad focus in terms of modelling his audience. His own awareness of the limits of *his* knowledge of the full scope of his audience is indicated by his adjustments to his texts described above, but his understanding of the tastes of those audiences is most eloquently betrayed by his adjustments to his representation of Antichrist.[441]

The limit of Ælfric's knowledge of source texts does not seem to change greatly over time. Ælfric's library and learning are both extensive, but also seemingly immutable. His modifications are not overtly influenced by access to new texts, but, I have suggested, are more probably influenced by a recognition in Ælfric of the changing tastes of the times and the evolving understanding he gleaned of his works' place in the wider genre of contemporary homiletic literature. On the other hand, Wulfstan has a growing appetite for source texts that he maintains throughout his early career. Wulfstan's redeployment of others' works, it seems, occurred as and when he gained access to them, rather than as

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[439] See above, Section 4.2.3.
[440] See above, Section 5.3.3.
[441] See above, Section 5.3.2.

and when appropriate to his broader point (as seems to be the case with Ælfric). Ælfric's texts certainly demonstrate a fuller understanding of the sources available in late Anglo-Saxon England than does Wulfstan, but the curio of Adso of Montier-en-Der's *vita* of Antichrist appears to have been both accessible and seductive to Wulfstan in a way that it was not to Ælfric. Whether this is due to restrictions of access or personal preference is more difficult to discern, but the evidence considered in this thesis favours the former. Wulfstan's manipulation of text in sympathy with audience is towards the performative, especially in terms of rhetorical features as described by Orchard and Dance.[442] Stylistically Wulfstan is a less subtle writer than is Ælfric but his lessons are, from even the earliest drafts of the texts as they survive, utterly clear, in a way that even Ælfric was uncertain pertained to his works.[443]

Regardless, the devil offered an opportunity to Ælfric and Wulfstan in that it provided a locus of motivation to their audience to improve their behaviour. Their ultimate aim was the education and improvement of their audiences' behaviour, in whatever way those audiences were conceived, and the evidence points to the writers conceiving the audience at the very widest of the interpretations offered in this thesis. How the devil is represented is less interesting to both authors than what the devil represents, and how the devil can be used to affect change in the audience. Both authors use the devil as a threat, both metaphorical and literal, to the continued happiness of their audiences. As an agent in the texts of Ælfric, the devil is usually represented in a narrative context rather than an expository one, and is always beaten by the holy men in these contexts. Ælfric's works indicate an understanding of Christian history as a constant, if one-sided, struggle between the devil and God for the ownership of souls. Wulfstan is not especially interested in the examples offered by the past, but instead focuses on the threats of the future, and as such uses Antichrist to a much greater extent than does Ælfric. Despite this, the tools Wulfstan uses, and particularly the devil/Antichrist collocation, shows that Wulfstan viewed the

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[442] See above, Section 5.3.3.
[443] As evinced by Ælfric's efforts to further clarify his own work in subsequent redactions, see, e.g., above, Section 3.4.2.

threat function of the devil and the devil's proxies in much the same way as Ælfric. Wulfstan's decision to rely on the efficacy of Antichrist as a threat, and as a more useful threat than the less specifically-defined devil, indicates an understanding of the limitations and prejudices of his audience, and the efficacy Wulfstan perceived in the use of Antichrist.

The final research question concerned the extent to which the ideas contained within these texts achieved the wide audience with which the investigation as a whole is concerned. This is an area in which we know far less than we do of the areas of more central importance to literary studies, as the research agenda has, understandably, favoured more literary topics than the distribution of physical objects in an historical period. However, the efficacy and importance of thematic studies such as the one provided here cannot be fairly assessed until we have a better picture of the way in which the texts with which it is concerned achieved audiences in the period of their active life. As such, my consideration of texts' dissemination has necessarily been considered in only a relatively limited manner up to this point, but where it has become central to the investigation, e.g. at the point of consideration of the extent to which Ælfric's late-stage modifications were effective in influencing the text as it spread across the country, indicates that understanding this attribute will be vital in shifting emphasis from authors' intent to authors' influence in the culture.

I would like to offer, here, some early thoughts on how research in this area can be carried out in order to augment and further contextualise the findings of this study and other thematic studies of a similar nature. This question necessarily broadens out the study beyond the devil, to the general case of the impact of thematic studies on our understanding of the period, but without such considerations, the impact of findings of the nature of those discussed above will be limited.

We have recognised that a range of pastoral models existed in the landscape of late Anglo-Saxon England,[444] and this range has obfuscated rather than nuanced our understanding of the use of texts in these environments. The basic issue remains that the archaeology supports a very expansive view of surviving evidence, while the surviving manuscripts suggest a very limited one. This disparity is likely to be exacerbated, not closed, over time as recent years have shown that new medieval sites are found more readily than are medieval manuscripts. It is becoming clearer that restrictive views of the role of both the clergy and the monastics simply cannot be supported by more comprehensive views of evidence as interdisciplinary approaches recognise more readily the way in which there was overlap between the roles of monks and parochial clergy from even quite early stages.[445] In the context of the periphery certainly, and quite possibly the large cities, local conditions caused the evolution of a pastoral model that could be supported by the local ecclesiastical infrastructure, with scope for modification, but not replacement.[446] The textual record, however, does indicate some information in its content that can be useful in allowing us to justify more

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[444] See above, Section 2.2, at n. 149. See also discussion of the minster debate and ecclesiastical geography above, at n. 111.

[445] 'The spiritual functions which a *monasterium* performed for the laity might include the administration of the sacraments of baptism, communion and burial, the provision of teaching and preaching to the laity, or the guardianship of holy relics.' Foot, 'Anglo-Saxon Minsters: a Review of Terminology', p. 212. 'While clearly it would be rash to make any general assumptions about institutions as diverse as the English *monasteria*, the evidence adduced […] suggests that they were envisaged as having some kind of pastoral responsibility for the localities in which they were planted.'; '[…] by the late seventh century all the early English kingdoms contained some of these major churches to which ecclesiastical dues were rendered and from which priests and other *clerici* and *monachi* travelled to preach, baptize, and visit the sick.'; 'What, however, needs to be stressed (since it will affect our understanding of the nature of pastoral activity in the period) is the fact that even communities which may be regarded as monastic in the strict sense had pastoral responsibilities.' Thacker, 'Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England', pp. 146, 139-40, 140.

[446] Regional variation was significant in emphasis but not in scope. There is circumstantial evidence that although in Worcester the minster model persists late into the period, preaching on a smaller scale at manorial churches and at estates of thegnly landlords and the King did take place. The evidence of the Church of Worcester as the principal land-holder in the later period may suggest that texts would have been more readily available to priests of small institutions in the diocese of Worcester than their more self-sufficient counterparts in the east. See Barrow, 'Wulfstan and Worcester'. The evidence from the east suggests more small-scale churches and the deterioration of the minster model at an earlier stage. See Blair, 'The Birth and Growth of Local Churches, c.850-1100'; Blair, 'From *Hyrness* to Parish: The Formation of Parochial Identities c.850-1100'; and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*. Dorset shows a broad cross-section of models and Wilcox has suggested that it was this eclectic mix that prompted Ælfric to produce vernacular preaching texts in the quantity he did. See Wilcox, 'Ælfric in Dorset'

expansive readings: Bishops retained overall responsibility for the provision of pastoral care, anxieties in the letters of Ælfric indicate that the issue for the provision of pastoral care is lack of demand due to poor education amongst the clergy, and importantly shows no indications that texts would be unavailable for supplying these parish priests. The physicality of the record, it has been recognised, favours the monastic in terms of the survival of texts. Our question must be "how does this limited and biased sample represent the population from which it is drawn?" How, in short, can we identify the parts of the textual record that do not survive?

Gameson suggests, 'it makes best sense on the whole to imagine a smaller number of major centres supplying the needs of most other places than to envisage every minster, manor or parish church, not to mention noble household, attempting to make its own manuscripts.'[447] Gameson's conclusion is logical and consistent with the information he describes, but here must be extended to understand better what happened to texts beyond the confines of these *scriptoria*. Traditionally scholars have implicitly relied on a model that shows two levels of dispersal from the origin, units described as 'text' and 'manuscript'. The author creates a text which inhabits at least one manuscript copy, copies are then transmitted between manuscripts. Each manuscript has at least one reader, readers can then transmit the text (orally) to the audience. A broad (and certainly not comprehensive) typology is illustrated below (figure 1).
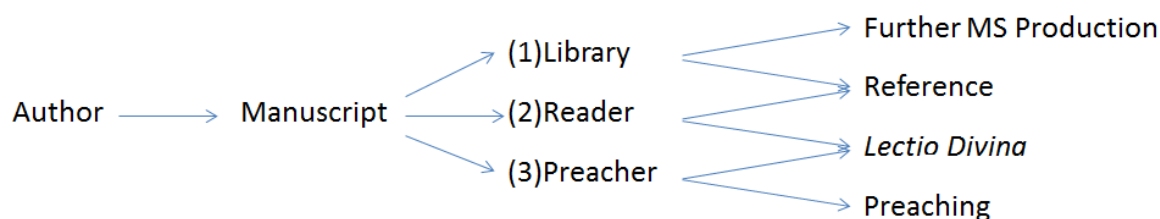


Fig. 1.

Each level of remove has left a unique mark on the record and we are variously more and less aware of how limited the sample that remains is as a fair representation of the population of which it forms a part. Authors leave their mark

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[447] Gameson, 'Anglo-Saxon Scribes and Scriptoria', p. 103. See above, at n. 145.

relatively clearly on the record and we have only a partial view of what we are missing from implicit evidence such as quotation of lost sources or booklists that include lost texts. That view is almost entirely informed by serendipity, in that we know of some texts that we have lost through various forms of accident: the texts that were to be found in manuscripts missing in the Cotton fire, texts referred to in booklists for which there is no record in the surviving manuscripts from Anglo-Saxon England, texts which appear as fragments in binding strips in later manuscripts, and so on.[448]

At the level of manuscript similar misadventure informs the picture we have: in addition to the above we can add manuscripts we can derive the existence of through the textual variants that exist (see Clemoes above), as well as those manuscripts in private collections which are not yet accounted for. At the level of reader we have some indications from annotations on manuscripts, continuous glosses, corrections, notes, as well as evidence from documents which suggest use-contexts such as the *Regularis Concordia* which indicate some potential readers.[449] Overall though, reading is a silent exercise in the sense that it need not leave any mark on the physical object. At the level of audience the picture is informed far more by evidence to be found outside of the manuscript context, e.g. population records indicated by Domesday, descriptions of urban and pastoral communities that indicate population and audience, and archaeological evidence, all of which can only give hints in an obscure data set. Establishing access to text is also difficult in such circumstances. Indeed in discerning the audience, internal evidence from the texts themselves may be our best source, from which, in the case of Ælfric's homilies, Wilcox discerns 'a wide-ranging lay audience [that] may have been inattentive at times.'[450]

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[448] E,g, the *Battle of Maldon* which only survives in a transcription. On booklists, see above Section 2.2, and Lapidge, *Library*.

[449] See e.g. the reference to the policing duties for returning books taken out of their usual contexts to their proper place in Caput VII: 'Qui etiam *circa* post Completorium circumeat claustrum et si qua inuenerit ibi codicum aut uestimentorum asportet ea ad Capitulum sequentis diei.' 'The *circa* shall also go round the cloister after Compline, and if he finds there codices or garments he shall take them away and show them at the next day's Chapter;' *Regularis Concordia*, p. 56.

[450] Wilcox, 'Ælfric in Dorset', p. 55.

Until we have located this audience in the evidence that survives we will be unable to discuss with certainty the level of influence that the vernacular texts exerted on the culture of late Anglo-Saxon England. I believe that this will require a more fundamental understanding of the manner in which the surviving manuscripts represent that which is lost and will rely on research that considers the whole of the distribution of manuscript culture in the period, rather than abstraction from individual case studies. Early work on the distribution of archaeological sites has used techniques such as network theory, and my early work in this area suggests that (within limits) this will be applicable to the network of manuscripts, the network of texts and the network of audiences in late Anglo-Saxon England.[451]

The representation of the devil in late Anglo-Saxon England performed a function, rather than a locus of interest, for both those who expressed it in the textual record and those who received that which was expressed. This function drives the deployment, form, and narratives in which the devil is used. This investigation has shown that our fascination with the devil is one that is unlikely to have been shared by late Anglo-Saxon homiletic authors except insofar as it provides them an opportunity to motivate action in their audiences, rather than for interest in the character itself. In their usage of the devil, however, authors betray their anxieties, their aims, and their sensitivities to the use of narrative in a didactic context each of which. In betraying these aspects of the performance of worship in late Anglo-Saxon England we are offered a rare insight into the perception of the laity in a textual record dominated by the more educated ecclesiastics.

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[451] See e.g. Leif Isaksen, 'The Application of Network Analysis to Ancient Transport Geography: A Case Study of Roman Baetica', *Digital Medievalist,* (2008) <http://www.digitalmedievalist.org/journal/4/isaksen/#d14547e417> ; Pádraig Mac Carron and Ralph Kenna, 'Universal Properties of Mythological Networks', *EPL Journal,* 99 (2012), pp. ; Ray Rivers, Carl Knappet, and Tim Evans, 'Network Models and Archaeological Spaces', in *Computational Approaches to Archaeological Spaces,* ed. by A. Bevan and M. Lake (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2013), pp. 99-126; Ray Rivers, Carl Knappet, and Tim Evans, 'What Makes a Site Important? Centrality, Gateways and Gravity', in *Network Analysis in Archaeology: New Approaches to Regional Interaction,* ed. by Carl Knappet (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 125-50.

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